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Ida Augusta Litchfield.

VICTORIA

AND

THE AUSTRALIAN GOLD MINES

IN 1857;

WITH NOTES ON THE

OVERLAND ROUTE FROM AUSTRALIA, VIÂ SUEZ.

BY

WILLIAM WESTGARTH,

LATE MEMBER OF THE VICTORIA LEGISLATURE.

WITH MAPS.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

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PREFACE.

In this work upon Victoria and its gold-fields, I have endeavoured to avoid any reference to the past of the colony, further than what seemed necessary to illustrate the present and suggest the future. To a commercial people the chief attractions of colonies are the events of the last season and the prices current of the last mail.

And yet Victoria has a history, notwithstanding that the interest in it may still centre in the handful only of her own people. Some of the earliest colonists, — a sort of antediluvians, who are able to look back even to the year 1835, — are still to be met with They are hurrying through bustling streets, where, a score of years before, their sheep and cattle cropped the natural grass. The veteran founder of Melbourne still survives, and sits in a stately legislative hall

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erected on a spot where he once wandered in a primeval forest to reclaim from kangaroo dominion the site of the future capital.

Here my preface should have stopped, but for the interval which has necessarily elapsed since the following chapters were in print. Another month's intelligence has arrived from Victoria during that interval. The rapid flow of events under the system of self-government upon which the colony has entered, would soon, if there was occasion for longer delay, convert my preface into a supplement. These events, severally, of commerce, government, and society, give promise of requiring a yearly volume for the due illustration of the Victorian annals. When the reader who is alive to the colony's affairs has perused the last of the following chapters, he may take an interest in the following remarks.

Mr. O'Shanassy, with his ministerial staff, had duly entered on the campaign of a re-election. Seven warriors took the field, but four only had emerged from the fight, including the general at their head. The new Premier was without legal advisers in the House to commence his political course, as neither his Attorney nor his Solicitor-general had as yet found

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favour with constituencies. He has saved, however, in this crisis, the constitutional requirement of a majority of his Ministry, and it is understood that the reins will not be abandoned. But the record that the future will place on the next page it is not easy to anticipate.

The railway system, in this sifting of the political machinery, is likely to receive a reconsideration, which may induce the colonial Government, with its expanding cares and obligations, to alter its proposed policy of constructing and owning the main lines, and to avoid the difficulties alike of a cumbrous public debt, and of a decision upon the cheap or costly principle of construction, by leaving the whole question to the readier solution of private interests.

The immigration question has been so far illustrated in its fresh bearings under the new political system. At a large public meeting in Melbourne, where the industrial classes were in strong muster, a condemnation was pronounced upon the old practice of the importation of labour at the public cost. The meeting is reported to have been an effective one.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce, in the usual annual address on the 1st of April last, alludes to

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the ever-recurring colonial feature, — overstocked markets, with their unsatisfactory effects. Large quantities of imported butter were being reshipped from the colony, on the ignominious mission, like many of another class of obnoxious subjects, of being "sent back to the place from whence they came."

The subject of Prison Discipline has received, of all others, the most effective illustration during the interval pertaining to the last mail. The popular excitement caused by the inquiry going on upon this subject seems to have penetrated even to the Prison Hulks of Hobson's Bay, where the convicts were found in possession of copies of the reports and evidence. On the 26th of March last, a large body of these convicts having refused to go to work, Mr. Price, the Inspector-General, was summoned from the Pentridge Stockade to Williamstown by telegraphic message; and while listening, only too fearlessly, to the prisoners' complaints, he was gradually surrounded by them, and attacked with such savage violence as to survive only a single day. These men belonged to the graver criminal class, who were under long sentences, and therefore heavily ironed. And yet, almost instantaneously, they had contrived to slip their chains and to

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stand free. Thus they faced the prison guard, who with comparatively small numbers, but with loaded fire-arms, opposed the intended escape. For an hour and a half in this attitude, the alternate promptings of despair and cowardice, so common to criminal life, swayed the mind of the undisciplined and disconcerted band. Assistance having in the meantime arrived to the authorities, all were safely secured on board the hulks. But so menacing was the conduct of the prisoners, that the officers could not venture, for a time, to go below the deck, and some sent in their resignations. The Government police vessel and the armed steamer had been ordered alongside of the rebellious hulks, with their respective guns all shotted, in readiness for action. "Order was restored," as the usual phraseology runs, when the external surface has been once more made smooth.

In these hulks, and at the large establishment at Pentridge near Melbourne, there are at present above nine hundred malefactors, besides many others in the principal gaol and elsewhere; and of these a very large proportion, who hold unquestioned pre-eminence in atrocity, are the British convicts. The class in question is still a legion, both in durance and at large,

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throughout the country; although a decreasing one under the united proscription of chains and the gallows, their own disorderly lives, and the general crusade of society. With what views can the Victorian colonists, already damaged and perplexed, regard the efforts in this country to restore the old transportation system, and to throw once more upon their society, it may be indirectly, but not in the end the less surely, that crime of her own which Britain is horrified to retain within herself? *

On this subject a colonial newspaper † quotes the address of one of the English judges at the late Warwick assizes on an occasion of passing sentence. The offenders were two burglars, who after a former conviction and release under ticket-of-leave, had been promptly returned to justice for fresh crimes. "You two young fellows," remarked the judge, "are well able to earn an honest livelihood, and I heartily wish that you could. I hope, for the sake of the convicts themselves, that we may return to a system which sends

* The remarks on Prison Discipline and Transportation in this preface are in connection with what has been said on the same subjects at pages 351—360.

† South Australian Register, 8th April, 1857.

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them out to a colony where labour is in great demand, and where they may (as many transports have done), regain good characters, and become useful members of society. In order to give you a chance of being sent to such a place, in the event of the former system being renewed, — as many persons, together with myself, hope it will be, I will sentence you to be transported for twenty years."

Amidst the difficulty of getting free passage for our industrial poverty to the colonies, here truly would be an open doorway, and however widely opened, it is to be feared it would be ever thronged. We may profitably recall the convict disturbance a few years ago at Weymouth, when a ship-load of criminals became uproarious at some delay in carrying out the sentences of transportation to golden Australia, to which the laws of their country had entitled them!

The colonies might suggest a plan to their mother country, cheaper and better to every interest, moral or financial, than this is; namely, that this parental consideration be extended to the destitute of her society before, rather than after, they have lapsed into crime.

Edinburgh: 22nd June, 1857.

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VICTORIA

AND

THE AUSTRALIAN GOLD MINES

IN

1857.

CHAPTER I.

A RETROSPECT.

For the third time I now sit down to pen my account of the colony of Victoria.

The leisure season of a voyage from Australia to the mother country has afforded me, on two previous occasions, the opportunity of drawing up a description of a country that now holds a conspicuous position amongst the antipodean possessions of our empire, the Colony of Victoria. Being now embarked on a third such voyage, I resume the accustomed vocation, and look back with familiar pleasure on the striking events of a scene with which I have been long identified, by having spent in it the most active years of life, and witnessed its advancement from a small pastoral settlement to a colony standing first in our empire in the scale and importance of its commerce.

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As my subject expands on each succeeding occasion of writing, so do I find the time allotted by the duration of the voyage to be diminished. The improvement of navigation is exemplified in nothing more conspicuously than as regards this Australian line. Leaving home not quite seventeen years ago, we cast anchor in Hobson's Bay on the one hundred and fortieth day; a four months' passage was then a master-stroke of nautical art. Returning to England about seven years afterwards, by the usual route of Cape Horn, our company congratulated themselves on a fair passage, as the question then stood, of one hundred and thirteen days. The large ships of the Port Phillip trade were then of four or five hundred tons, and the selection at the port of Melbourne was sadly restricted if we required these vessels to be A 1 at Lloyd's. Who could have predicted then the change of the next five or six years? The discovery of our gold fields, and the immense commerce they have created, have been adequately responded to from the other hemisphere, by a merchant fleet worthy of the occasion. The finest ships of the world are now directed to Port Phillip; and we have to record the additional fact, that by mere sail propulsion the outward passage has been accomplished in sixty-four days, and the homeward in sixty-three days.

An improvement even more important is the acquisition of steam conveyance upon the Australian line. This was immediately given to us by British enterprise in the general precipitation of all things commercial by the gold discoveries; and although this mode of communication has experienced interruption and failure,

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chiefly from those European international hostilities which seem now, happily, at an end, yet there is good reason to expect that the resumption of this vital communication which we now enjoy will be final and permanent. The Australian commerce, as it now stands in the present and the future, unsupported by a steam postal and passenger service, is an anomaly that ought not and cannot occur again.

But let me return to my comparisons in the march of improvement, which takes place with steam conveyance as well as any other. My second homeward voyage, six years after the first, was by steam *via* Suez, during a postal service which was soon afterwards abandoned. Partly from the use of boats second-rate as to speed, partly from a needless detour which commenced with Batavia, Singapore, and Penang, the passage on this occasion consumed eighty-nine days. But at length, and at the time I now write, the finest and fastest steamers are moving to and from Port Phillip. It is expected that the passage *via* Suez to Southampton will be accomplished in fifty-three days, including delays for intermediate coaling.

Nor are we to consider that this attainment, however in advance of preceding efforts, at all limits the question. The outward passage from England by steam, *via* the Cape of Good Hope, has lately been effected within fifty days, exclusive of delay for coaling; but the constructors of the Great Eastern, who have now nearly completed their colossal undertaking, anticipate that this wonderful mammoth of the steamboat world will

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effect a voyage direct from England to the port of Melbourne, and without intermediate call, in a period of from thirty-three to thirty-six days.

The incessant change illustrated in the foregoing description, is in harmony with the features of life, social and commercial, in the colony I am about to delineate. Life in Australia, under such circumstances, has its striking contrasts with the comparative stillness of home society. But as the change in our thriving British settlements is ever one of progress,—ever a continuous ascent from the small to the great, from poverty to wealth, from the lesser to the larger consideration and importance,—so it is a race in which the interest and the stimulus generally outweigh a certain measure of the social unquiet that is necessarily one feature of such a condition. An English village, with its ivy-clad old cottages, and the clear "brook that brawls along" its trim and pretty vale, may be identified for an age together, without any material change of aspect; but in half that time a colonial village has become a city, and extinguished, perhaps, every feature of its pristine scattered and humble appearance.

But this is not effected without an agony of turmoil that does not suit every temperament. At the same time, the mere physical change is but the external indication of the social features and tendencies. The levellings of new streets and roads, encroaching on the primeval sod where we had rambled in fresh country air but a year or two before; the everlasting uproar of bricks and mortar at every turn; the rude toil of re-

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claiming the pristine soil; the straggling, unmade roads, furrowed in a hundred lines, and knee-deep in mud with the ceaseless traffic of energetic colonists;—all are indicative of a state of things widely different from what exists in old societies. In the latter, these preliminary toils have been mostly overcome, and the excess of labour power that prevails tends to the high refinement of the social aspect. It is, however, the elevation of the few on the shoulders of the many. The ruder aspects of colonial life are inseparably connected with the elevation of the many. That is, in truth, the great feature of colonies; an elevation consequent upon the urgency of demand in a new country for those industrial attainments that are the common patrimony of the mass of society; for qualifications, in short, that may be easily reached by the well-disposed and industrious of every class.

It is rather more than sixteen years since I first set foot in Melbourne. It was then a village of 4000 souls; and I amused myself in traversing its lines of streets, thinly sprinkled with flimsy edifices, within which, however, a stirring business was being carried on, both in imported merchandise and in the numerous vacant allotments that as yet comprised the prominent feature of the township. I had arrived just upon the decline of a speculative movement amongst the colonists, that we are accustomed to term a land mania. There had been large accessions of colonists and capital to the place since two years preceding: and this circumstance, together with a general faith that the country

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must make a rapid progress, soon set a tide of speculation in motion; and once in motion, it as usual went far ahead of the proper boundary, and as usual again went back, with a crash which the disappointed colonists could not understand the meaning of.

This final tumble had not yet occurred at the time of my arrival. There had only been a culmination and the beginning of a descent. I witnessed still some of the celebrated champagne lunches at the auction sales, by means of which the speculators in town allotments sought to seduce the common sense at least, if not the other senses, of the competing audience; for they still reckoned that, although the expensive stimulant clipped five or ten per cent. from their proceeds, yet, if its agency gave double that amount to the biddings, there was a clear balance of gain. When Sir George Gipps' the then governor of the colony, was accounting for the depressed condition of the Port Phillip district of his government (as Victoria was then termed) three years after these and similar extravagances, he remarked that, during his late visit to Melbourne, he found that the vicinity was strewed with empty champagne bottles, whose expensive contents the jovial colonists could not, of course, have enjoyed for nothing. And so we might say as to other expenses of these mania days; for although the valuations of property were transient, the expenses of business and private life to which they gave rise were a real and irrevocable item.

The reactions that follow such manias are called bad times: they are in reality the reverse; they are the

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seasons when industry and economy restore the losses of the past, and place everything once more on a footing of prosperity. Such was the case, at least, with our settlement, which, from the year 1844, took again the ascendant upon a basis of substantial prosperity. The natural adaptation of the country for pasturage had already peopled the interior, and the tallow and fine wool of the numerous flocks and herds of the squatters were already the subjects of awakened attention to the commercial interests of the mother country.

In the year 1847, when I first left the colony to visit England, a great progress had been made. The once straggling village of Melbourne had then for four years enjoyed a municipal corporation, whose attacks upon the stumps of trees that variegated many of the streets, and the gutters and gullies that the rains had contributed to the pre-municipal scenery, had effected a marked change. The capital of the future Victoria contained about 12,000, and the whole settlement 36,000 colonists, exclusive of aborigines. The rapid march of squatting settlement had reached every spot available for pasturage. This rare feature of the vacant lands of new countries, namely their natural and immediate availableness, gave to the country a striking advantage. While other colonies were laboriously toiling, step by step, through primeval forests, south-eastern Australia lay open and ready to the hand of man. The Crown lands of most colonies are literally, as well as by official designation, the Waste lands, and lie unused until sold and reclaimed. In Victoria

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they were occupied at once by the squatter, who has ever since contributed a prominent article of colonial commerce — the fine wools of Australia; and he will yet long continue his vocation until the plough and spade, in their tardier movements, have appropriated the lands to still more available purpose.

The life's blood of new countries is their export produce, when they are fortunate enough to have any, because it enables the people to purchase the imports on which so much depends for the amenities of life and the means of progress. Judicious selections of imports place the labour power of new countries on a par in some respects with that of old countries, because the former can avail itself, in common with the latter, of the highest mechanical appliances. These the senior only can produce; but the junior can purchase them by those happy features that place at its disposal the annual fund of the exports. The squatting produce had hitherto supplied, in comparatively ample measure, this vital fund for the colony's progress. The wool had become a standard article, not only of Australian, but British commerce. On the great event which has given a new destiny to Australia, namely the discovery of her gold fields, these south-eastern colonies were approaching the proportions of a pastoral empire. In 1850, from the tiniest beginning half a century before, they were in possession of 2,000,000 of horned cattle and 16,000,000 of sheep, browsing upon the natural herbage of the waste territory. Twenty years previously, only a scanty and intermittent supply of co-

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lonial wool found its way to the home market, to arouse no attention either by its quantity or its quality; for neither had this article become as yet an object of great moment, even in Australia: which was scarcely, indeed, to be expected without appreciation in the home market. But now an annual fleet of more than a hundred sail was conveying the fleece of these colonies to the home markets; and the produce which had so lately before comprised so insignificant a proportion of the British imports of wool, now formed the most conspicuous contribution; and, indeed, exceeded all the other importations of this article put together. Australia and Tasmania then exported nearly 40,000,000 pounds weight of fine wool; and about one half of this large production was shipped from the ports of the youngest colony, Victoria.

This was the pastoral era of Victoria's history; and the importance of the pastoral interest had given to it a prominence of consideration that overshadowed all the other colonial vocations. But a marvellous change was at hand, which has peopled the pastoral solitudes of the interior with the busy scenes of human industry. In the beginning of 1851 the Australian gold fields were first discovered. The first discovery did not take place within the bounds of Victoria, but the ardour of a sanguine faith soon traced the precious metal into that territory; and within a few months many thousands were gathering the golden harvest at Ballarat and around Mount Alexander.

Eighteen months after these important discoveries, I had occasion to revisit England; and I now revert

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with interest to that interval which displayed the full force, novelty, and disorder that resulted from the first effects of these discoveries. Many evils that we then dreaded as things inseparable from a land of gold have, however, passed away; and when, after eighteen months more, I returned to the colony, a pleasing surprise awaited me, not only in the progress and improvement visible everywhere from a liberal use that had been made of the vast means that had flowed in upon the colonists, but also from the restoration of social quiet and good order; for the recollections of the past still presented to my mind our streets crowded with the uncouth attire and unshaven chins of successful diggers, whose rough frolics — to call them no worse — neither the public (other than their numerous selves) nor a new and precarious police could keep in restraint. I still remembered the brawling taps of more than two hundred public-houses, the wealth and predominating influence of the public-house interest, and the despair of the other sections of society for the higher aims and purposes of human life. A vision still haunted me of servants ever seized with a diggings mania—the male proportion to dig, and the female to secure their share and interest by the safe right of being constituted a better half of the digger; and for the sake of which chance, ever floating before their eyes, the ambitious fair ones could never be engaged even temporarily in domestic service, excepting in those situations of main thoroughfares that were deemed favourable to their impatient hopes.

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In still more unpleasant reminiscences I was made equally aware of the improving change. The originally penal condition of the adjacent colony of Tasmania had left within her population thousands of the worst criminals of British society. It was only after a protracted and alienating contest between the colonists and their mother country, that the latter gave way, and arrested the noxious stream which her system of convict transportation had so long maintained. The cessation, however, was but of yesterday, and the accumulations of the past were still in the colony, and still to be disposed of. All this rank and file of crime,—those with sentences modified, curtailed, or expired, with tickets of leave or conditional pardons, with permission or without permission,—whenever they got the opportunity, streamed over as from an open gaol to the all-attractive shores of the golden colony. Spreading themselves chiefly over the highways and gold fields, but appearing occasionally everywhere else, the whole country became the scene of incessant and revolting crimes. The most atrocious bushranging was with difficulty suppressed, or even tracked out and convicted. The police were bribed by the wealth of the ruffian gangs, or the cases broke down through their complex machinery, which commanded any number of oaths for alibis or contradictions. The large proportion of the vicious gave to their cause an *esprit de corps* of which the rest of society felt the power much more than it perceived the mode of cure.

Crime seemed to have been scared from all but this

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convict class. Never one atrocity baser than another but a Van Diemen's Land convict was at the bottom of it. The gold dust was stolen from the ship's strong room while she lay in harbour ready for sea; and a gang of five desperadoes took possession of the highway a few miles from Melbourne, where, holding sway for upwards of an hour, they successively bailed up and robbed twenty-two astonished and helpless passengers. The Lieutenant-Governor, who wished to explain and excuse the indignation of the colonists towards the convict system of the Home Government, intimated in his despatch that out of twenty-six detected bushranging parties, twenty-five had been ascertained to have been British convicts.

With pleasure I observed on my return that society had been able so soon to readjust itself after the first unsettlement of the gold discoveries. Crime and drunkenness had far from ceased, but they did not prominently obtrude to the discouragement of society; and although the wives still grumbled about domestic servants, and the other sex were perplexed as to whether the veil, parasol, and white kids contained their lady friend, or only her refined house assistant, still the evil was not irremediable or beyond those means that a liberal and considerate bearing places at our disposal. I observed a well appointed police; a methodical industry in the pursuit of business that told of hard work and competition. There were neither galloping profits nor corresponding extravagance. The gold mines which at the places first discovered seemed more productive

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even to the simple mechanical appliances of that time, and therefore gave sudden abundance to persons unused to wealth, were now more in the way of yielding a moderate amount to all; so that the jovial days of lighting pipes with five pound notes, and devouring a twenty pound spread upon a slice of bread and butter, had entirely disappeared from the varieties of digging life.

Between two and three years more have elapsed since I returned to Victoria, to remark her improved aspect as compared with the state of things when I had previously left her shores; and now, upon yet another survey, when again bound for my native country, it is this last interval I have chiefly to deal with as I draw up my third description of the colony. The marked race of progress and improvement already alluded to has not been arrested since in its further course; and I should not overestimate the value of this additional progress and its accompanying amenities did I say that they were perhaps quite as conspicuous, when compared with the condition of the colony on my return from England, as that condition itself was when compared with the earlier irregularities that marked the first two years of our gold-mining era. The country is well appointed as to police, pervaded to some extent by good roads, and traversed in important directions by the electric telegraph. The shrill railway whistle breaks, with a reminiscence of European advancements, the morning slumbers of the townspeople. A scale of commerce of a magnitude unusual to colonial life gratifies

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our ambition by the sphere of action which it offers to enterprise and talent.

And these considerations of a material bearing are diversified by others of a higher scope. The complete self-government recently awarded to Victoria, in common with other colonies of Eastern Australia, calls up the energies of the people for their social and political welfare.

Another land mania, which of course came over the colonists when the marvellous accessions of wealth flowed into their pockets from the gold mines, has added its quota of benefit in its own harsh but effective process. And as this mania, while in the ascendant, aided the earlier irregularities, so in the reaction that followed in the train of these evils there has been a commercial and social compensation in the present industry and moderation of all classes; which are, as we may hope, steadily rearing up a great and prosperous future.

The most sanguine cannot expect that a prosperous colony can compete, as to all domestic and social comforts, with the settled society of the parent country. The measure of the general prosperity is indeed the measure of a certain species of discomfort arising to the refined and the educated, who have attained their mental culture under different circumstances from those experienced in colonies.

When the drawbacks to this class arise out of the independent position of the other sections of society, they may well be balanced by the consideration of the

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general prosperity of all. Our home friends, who purpose an emigration to thriving colonies, to improve their scanty means and sustain a cherished social position, must weigh one with another, in a just balance, all the aspects of a colonial life. The dearness of everything carries its compensation, in so far as it represents, which it usually does in conspicuous measure, the profits that are freely appropriated by every class that lends an agency in the case. The troubles of domestic establishments pertain to a country to whose prosperities the fair complainants are nevertheless indebted for the gratifying cares of a household, and the considerable means of keeping it up. I describe indeed a country which those who are independent and unconcerned may not call altogether a pleasant home. But who can remain unconcerned in Victoria? From every mansion, humble or pretentious, some inmate daily issues forth to join in the common race, and to identify all the household with the fortunes of the country.

I shall conclude this chapter by directing the reader's attention to a few figures, illustrative of that feature for which Victoria has been so remarkable,—progress. The Anglo-Saxon race have well-nigh monopolised this word in its present signification. In reviewing the past, I am naturally most impressed with those eras of comparison that were connected with my own movements and experiences: I see before me the little settlement, into whose community I first entered less than seventeen years ago; the growing consequence it

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had assumed at the time I took a first farewell. But as yet the future Victoria was merely the district of an older colony, New South Wales, and was distinguished little further than as a great pastoral country, with the slight tenure and scattered tenantship of the squatting system over its beautiful and productive territory. The discovery of gold has brought the required change, although after a rude and precipitate fashion; and the solitudes of the interior now awake to the human voice, and the accompanying noise of man's industry. Victoria is already a distinct colony, under a government for itself. My second home-visit leaves the colony in the initiatory turmoil of its gold-fields' life; and now, as I proceed upon the third, this turmoil has effectually subsided, and the colony rides quietly upon that eminence which the enlarged statistical figures of its later operations will readily suggest to the mind of the reader.

Those periods happen to be not unsuitable for the illustration which I have in view to present to the reader. The Imports, the Exports, and the Population of Victoria, at those successive periods which, as connected with my own movements, I have been accustomed to array in a lively mental comparison, appear as follows; premising that the settlement of the Port Phillip district, as our colony was first designated, commenced about four years previous to those tiny figures which are given on the first line of this Table, but which are themselves, perhaps, quite as remarkable as any of the others, when the age of the place is held in view.

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COMPARATIVE ILLUSTRATION OF THE POPULATION AND COMMERCE OF VICTORIA.

Year.	Population, Average of Year.	Value of Imports.	Value of Exports.
1839	7,000	£ 205,000	£ 78,000
1846	34,000	316,000	425,000
1852	130,000	4,044,000	7,452,000
1856	360,000	14,115,000	16,000,000

A view still more satisfactory will be derived from regarding the averages of these intervals, rather than the isolated leaps of particular years. By this means we shall represent the commerce and progress of the entire period. This aspect, with a slight modification of the intervals for the sake of a nearer equality, presents itself as follows:—

Yearly Average of		Yearly Average of Population.	Imports.	Exports.
1835—1840	6 years.	5,000	£ 121,000	£ 46,000
1841—1846	6 „	23,500	250,000	295,000
1847—1852	6 „	74,000	1,190,000	2,003,000
1853—1857	5 „	300,000	14,514,000	13,861,000

The year 1857 in the above summary has been estimated for upon data which, in the present even progress of the colony, are not likely to be found far from the truth when the year has passed over. These tables furnish a concise but effective picture of Anglo-Saxon development. A very sanguine temperament,

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in surveying the past, might be left without restraint to expatiate on the future. Many of us have already grown up from the child to the man upon our new colonial home; but the young Victoria has outgrown us all.

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CHAP. II.

ABORIGINAL VICTORIA.

British Population.—Number and Increase.—Rapid Erasure of Aboriginal Features.—Resemblance between South Africa and Australia.—Isolation and Peculiarity are features of the Present, and the remote Past.—Want of Water Scenery.—System of Salt Lakes in Victoria.—Lake Colac, fresh.—The stony Rises and extinct Volcanoes.—Natural Forest Trees.—Scrub.—Scanty Riverage.—Animal Life.—Few Natural Fruits, &c.—Climate changeable.—Unsuitable Habits of Colonists.—Tables of Mortality.

THE colony of Victoria, by a census of the people to be taken towards the middle of this year, 1857, will be found to contain probably at least 400,000 colonists, exclusive of a small remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants. The other colonies of Australia—New South Wales, South Australia, and West Australia—may be estimated to contain together an addition of 400,000 souls; and, if we add Tasmania and New Zealand, which are commonly comprised in the major denomination of Australasia, we have nearly 150,000 more. There is thus a population already about one million strong, and rapidly multiplying in numbers, whose thoroughly British features connect the head of the

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empire with its great southern adjunct alike by the self-interests of commerce and the strong ties of natural affinity.

Large as this population appears when compared with the interval within which such a breadth of society has been transferred by a lengthened voyage from the antipodes, a feature equally remarkable is the extent of the commercial operations. The auspicious features of our new southern home give to every grade a measure of prosperity that deals out very unusual means to the masses of society. As Australia exemplifies what a large amount the happy circumstances of a country can enable it to produce, so, on the other hand, she exemplifies what the people of such countries can consume, and how much can be added, by the large wave of commerce that is thus put in motion, to the mutual exchanges and social intercourse of the world.

Britain has, for some time past, been marking the amenities of her progress by the evidence of the increased consumption of some articles that are in use among all classes as necessaries of life. Thus, a marked increase of late years in the consumption of tea and sugar may be safely accepted as a sign that the masses are enabled to indulge in a larger share than formerly of these necessaries. The consumption has risen to 2 lbs. of the first and 30 lbs. of the last article per annum to each head of the population, from a ratio that was one third less not many years since. How far our mother country is yet from the limit of the powers of society in this

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respect, under improved circumstances, may be suggested by the fact that these articles are consumed in Australia to five times the larger quantity above alluded to. If this result is due in some measure to the unusual proportion of adult male population that is found in the early stages of a remote colony, yet to a far greater extent is it owing to the condition of that colony which distributes to all ranks of society the means of procuring a full share of the chief requisites of existence.

The external trade of Britain, as indicated by the value of the export produce, gives for the last four years an average of nearly 4*l.* per head of the population. And this is a maximum result attained from a ratio of only one half but a few years previously! If we now take the case of Victoria, and average the last five years as given in the table at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, the result will be a yearly exportation of 46*l.* per head of population. "All countries are not blessed with gold-fields thus to precipitate their commerce," our venerable mother may remark, as she views the easy race of her young daughter, and looks back upon the long and toilsome march by which she has herself secured her present greatness. True; but yet the Australian commerce is not the less effective either to the country whence it emanates or to the world beyond to which it circulates. And this is the point of view with which I am now chiefly concerned.

The point of interest in this subject to which I will here allude is the rapid change which the increase of

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the Anglo-Saxon race, and the gigantic commerce their industry creates, are already producing on the pristine face of the once mysterious and ever peculiar Australia. Already the aboriginal population of the colonised territory have well nigh become extinct. Whole tribes have died off within a score of years; and even the recollection of them has ceased, excepting to the very few whose philosophy or humanity had attracted their attention to these outcast subjects of our common human nature. The emu, the remarkable wingless bird that once cropped the native grass and trod the open forest of the present site of Melbourne, is now rarely met with, even in the far interior; and the curious black cockatoo, which would chatter in the vicinities of Melbourne ten or twelve years ago, is now a rare object even throughout the colony. The peculiar quadrupeds of Australia rapidly retreat before man and his attendants. Even the rat has already swarmed out the aboriginal vermin of his own size and modes of life; and the timid kangaroo retreats before every constituent, from the cat and dog upwards, of the new immigration that accompanies the white man.

The constant and regular cropping of the natural herbage by the numerous live stock gradually produces a change of aspect. The natural sod thus becomes thicker, and gives a more English aspect to the surface. The change is to the side of improvement; but the Australian features thus piece by piece drop away. As the ocean highway to far Australia becomes a more rapid and easy mode of transit, the European

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naturalist will visit us more frequently; but each successive visitor will find the true Australia only further driven away, until he searches for its peculiarities in almost inaccessible wilds of the far interior.

Leaving our energetic countrymen busy in their new scene as a hive of bees, and while impressing their modern stamp on all around fast obliterating the aboriginal features, I shall offer a few remarks upon these features just as they appear to the general observer, and without any pretence to scientific manner or accuracy.

Men of science have endeavoured to associate the intelligence of nations and races with the extent of sea-coast margin with which their country is favoured, and the energy and enterprise which are thus called up alike by temperateness of climate, variety of scenery, and facilities of commerce. The two great territories of Africa and Australia, while they furnish us with the lowest specimens of humanity, are both equally remarkable for the solid unindented form of their coast line. No great inlets open up the recesses of the vast interior, and the proportion of rivers also is very small in comparison with other countries. The precarious and unsuitable climate of such arid tracts may be supposed to check any steady progress of mankind, by instituting unsettled habits having an opposite tendency.

There is a striking resemblance between Africa and Australia in some other particulars. This resemblance, however, is limited to Southern Africa. Both countries reach at their extremities the temperate latitudes of the south; but such latitudes, which have proved so favour-

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able to man in the north, have not saved the degradation of these southern populations. But what has probably militated most against them, has been their far removal from the great stream of human intercourse, which, since the dawn of history, has been passing and repassing upon the great highway of the Mediterranean, and thence westward through the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf, towards China and the myriads of the populous and beautiful islands of the adjacent equatorial archipelagos. From such a cause it may be, that as Africa becomes more remote towards the south, her population is more degraded, although her climate is more salubrious. Future generations will have the opportunity that is denied to us, of comparing the effects of these peculiar countries, after an adequate interval, upon their new Anglo-Saxon occupants. They make their start with advantages which their predecessors never enjoyed, and with that establishment of constitution that may resist the sinister proportion of surrounding influences.

The peculiar features of Australia have been the subject of repeated comment, from the reveries of the philosopher who suggested that the mysterious territory might have dropped upon our earth out of space, to all the quieter modes that now prevail for explaining natural phenomena. These latter, then, have mostly contemplated merely an isolated, out-of-the-way territory, whose human population have, through long ages of the past, been left to their own doings, under lines less auspicious than have fallen to their brethren of mankind elsewhere; and whose animal and vegetable

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world, of its own most curious types, seem to have been preserved with a marvellous exclusiveness from intermixture with the other organised forms of the rest of the globe.

But wonderful as the present aspect is, how much more are we surprised to find this exclusive and peculiar feature traced back into ages not merely of historical, but of geological, computation! Australia has her geological traditions, as well as other countries. If she fell, like Saturn, from above, it is at least no modern event, even in a geological sense. Science is slowly reading the physical history of the past in the strata of Australian geology. Here are the analogues of other countries, the corresponding systems of rocks and strata, showing that Australia was identified with the great cycles of the earth's developments, although she still preserved her local distinctions. There are Australian granites, and basalts, and coal formations. The eras of huge mammalian quadrupeds of various kinds in the other continents, are marked by corresponding eras in ancient Australia; but all these animals bear, in this remote era, the Australian stamp by which they are now distinguished. All the quadrupeds of the Australia of to-day, if we except the doubtful claim of the dingo or native dog to be considered aboriginal, bear the marsupial character; and this great modern distinction of Australian mammals is still traced in the records of the past. Cotemporary with the mastodons and dinotheria of other countries, Australia had her race of these pachydermata; not, indeed, rivalling the

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first in dimensions, but bearing somewhat of a proportion to her smaller modern races that the mastodon did to the elephant and other animals that represent the largest forms now existing. Kangaroos sixteen feet high sported over the ancient sod, and unwieldy creatures that combined the features of the elephant, the wombat, and the kangaroo, were basking, probably, in the same bright sunshine that now enlivens Australian scenery. All these animals carried with them, either in the perfect or imperfect development, the Australian feature of the marsupium. This peculiarity, which forms a link between the perfectly viviparous and the oviparous or egg-bearing animals, marks the lowest order of mammiferous races; and it is not uninteresting to observe that the same strange country which these creatures, stamped by this relative inferiority, have so long and so uninterruptedly occupied, is found in the co-possession of the most degraded and irreclaimable specimens of the human race.

There is one feature of Australian scenery which is soon detected by European eyes. This is the rarity, or the entire absence, of the contrast of water. The scanty riverage of the country is appropriated in much more than an average proportion by the territory of Victoria; and yet even there, from many of her commanding heights where the clear atmosphere permits the most extensive vista, the varieties of hill and dale, of mountain and plain, of forest and open glade, fair and peaceful as they often appear, are destitute of the charm of water. That long, tortuous line of trees stretching to the dis-

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tant horizon, those steep ravines traversing the elevated plains before us, we may be assured contain water in their lowest depths, and refresh the wearied traveller as he quits his parched elevation and descends into the shade and verdure of the well-known river courses. They are chains of ponds, perhaps, forming so many natural cisterns throughout the country, whose depth is proof against the casualties of an uncertain climate. But although we may thus know that water exists, still its enlivening presence and its pleasant sparkling in the sunbeams are too often wanting to the eye to complete the effect of an Australian landscape.

There is another singularity which the traveller will soon have occasion to notice as he traverses a dry and warm country. Those pretty sheets of interior water in several districts, some of considerable area, others so small and symmetrically circular as to look like works of art — these lakes, small and great, are for the most part of salt water. There is quite a system of these saline waters, a miniature Caspian Sea, exhibited in Lake Corangamite and some adjacent smaller lakes. This expanse of water, thirty miles in length, with its sand beach, projecting headlands, and tortuous coast-outline, forms a fine object on approach from the east, and as surveyed from the tops of the Warrion Hills that rise from its eastern shore. Journeying from the east, we have passed many small salt lakes, within twenty miles of Corangamite. Our surprise, therefore, is only equalled by our pleasure that, in the bosom of this salt system, we should emerge upon the blue and

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placid Lake Colac, perfectly fresh, and occupying a shallow bed at the base of the eastern slopes of the Warrions.

This lake is six miles in length by three to four in breadth, varying somewhat in its area according to the dry or moist season of the year. Its waters are so unusually shallow for the extent of surface,—being scarcely six feet in depth, as I was informed,—that one is surprised at the constancy of the supply in this dry climate. About fifteen years ago, however, some settlers, on sinking a well through the volcanic rocks and rich soil about two miles to the north of the lake, at about a dozen feet from the surface, came upon a mass of clear, running, fresh water, which was naturally conjectured to be on its way to Colac. By such supplies, whether from above or beneath, both Colac and Corangamite maintain a constant contest with the evaporative agencies; and so effective are the latter that the former do not appear to have ever been able so to replenish their respective basins as to occasion an overflow. Neither of the lakes has any outlet to the sea.

The salt lakes form a prominent feature among the volcanic aspects of the country. The vicinities of Vesuvius and Etna are not more clearly volcanic than the western district of Victoria, from the Colac district to that of Mount Gambier, beyond the western boundary. Over this expanse of two hundred miles we are rarely out of sight of some conical volcanic peak, and have occasionally a dozen in one vista, whose well-defined and, in some instances, most capacious craters give evi-

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dence that the present pastoral tranquillity has not always, in the past, characterised this scene of Plutonic agency. Some of the circular lakes have the appearance of an escarpment. The water is generally very shallow, very briny in taste, resting on a stiff, light, slate-coloured clay, of an unknown depth; as the adventurous foot may experience a pace or two from the firm grassy margin. In the middle of summer this water is often completely dried up, leaving a hard glittering surface covered with salt crystals. From small lakes of this kind in the vicinity of Lake Boloke, considerable quantities of this "native salt" were collected and hawked through the country for sale, prior to the gold discoveries, and would even reach the sea-ports, where it obtained some custom when the supplies from England happened to fall short. The expenses of labour and inland carriage, and the taste for a better prepared article, have since excluded this salt from any general use.

The Warrion hills present us with ten or twelve craters in a single group. Passing to the volcanic regions further west, the curious in that kind of scenery will find abundant study in viewing the crater of Mount Eeles, and the lower fall of the Wannon, where a torrent of water is now precipitated into the depths of a gorge, from whence the surrounding indications lead us to infer that a torrent of fire had formerly issued.

A feature usually accompanying these extinct volcanoes, is the "Stony Rises," whose common appearance is not unlike that of a long pile of large stones heaped together in arbitrary courses as for some huge break-

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water, or like the walls of a gigantic fortress which a convulsion of nature or art has entirely broken up and crumbled in a heap along the line of its former elevation. These rises are found traversing the surface of the igneous rock formation that we may suppose has been the gift of the adjacent craters. The aspect of the case impresses the observer with the idea that they are an upheaval, *in situ*, of this newer crust, caused by some force immediately beneath. The part of the surface that has not been thus disturbed, is already covered with a rich soil. The rises in general show only thinly-spread patches. In the Colac district, however, many are quite smooth, as also well-grassed; and beneath the surface soil in some instances there has been found an impure limestone, which resembles the ancient upraised bed at the margin of one of the larger salt lakes to the west of Corangamite.

Thirteen years have now elapsed since I last visited this beautiful and romantic district of Colac. The stillness of pastoral life which it then alone displayed, possessed, no doubt, its charm. Sleek, fat cattle quaffed the sweet waters of Colac; and a long narrow jetty that stretched into the shallow lake, and called up in the first distant view an evanescent notion of maritime traffic, marked where the washing and shearing of the sheep would break the general quiet by a brief periodical activity. But the stranger sought instinctively, although in vain, for a further trace of man's presence, for the plough and the spade, the cottages and hamlets of thousands of happy homes, and ten thousands of

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frolicking children, enjoying the plenty of a country and climate that could scarcely be surpassed for its adaptation to human happiness.

Colac, however, has not been stationary during these intervening years, although the resources keep far in advance of the still scanty population. But farms and hamlets now diversify the natural landscape. There is the township of Colac, and the electoral district of Colac, whose representative is sworn to everlasting conflict in the colonial parliament for roads and bridges to his rising locality. This is a common picture of interior Victoria. The noise of progress and the mixed scene of human nature have their aspect of shade, and the earlier squatter, who is ever encroached upon by this progress, revels in the philosophy of the dark side. His eyes now everywhere encounter the smoke of an intruding settler rising from some severed fraction of his original domain; and he knows not whether most to deplore the dirt and miseries of small farming, or lament the departing beauties of his sheep walk and his pristine Australia.

To the newly arrived colonist one object immediately striking is the sombre olive hue of the perennial foliage of the trees. There is no annual fall of the autumn leaf that has called up so much of the poetic imagination of home. The thin foliage of the massive or stately gum trees, beneath which he seeks an imperfect shelter from the hot bright sun, will also strike his mind in a comparison with the umbrageous trees of other lands. The open forest and the grassy surface of a pleasantly

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undulating country create a more favourable impression. This is not by any means the universal feature of Australia; but it is a sufficiently general characteristic to form a mark of distinction, and to give to the country the rare advantage of being comparatively prepared for the uses of civilised man. Over these grassy lands he has effected an easy, rapid, and successful colonisation by the depasturing of sheep and cattle.

The common tree of the country is the red gum, one species of the Eucalyptus family, of which there are various other members. They are called, in common speech, gum trees, because gum is exuded from some of the species. But the red gum, with his fine glossy and massive stem, is not one of these. In some districts this monarch of the Australian forest attains to a prodigious size, and, from his slow growth, must have reached the age of some hundreds of years. I have myself traversed a forest of these trees in the district of the Upper Yarra River, where their elevation must have been two hundred feet. The stems were there usually straight, of enormous mass, and often without a branch for a hundred feet from the ground. More commonly the tree is found twisted into all grotesque shapes. Many of these fine veterans are greatly disfigured, and most sadly maimed in their vital energies, by the habit of the natives of kindling their fires against the trees, and cutting out with their tomahawks large sheets of the bark to form into canoes, shields, or other articles.

After noticing the dull perennial foliage, I may

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allude to the trees without leaves, of which the native cherry tree and several species of the "she-oak" are the most common. The former gives the standing instance of everything going by contraries at the antipodes, by producing a cherry with the stone on the outside. Our colonists have a very random habit of fastening home names upon colonial objects, just as the fancy strikes them; and these survive in spite of common sense, somewhat as the vulgar tongue of a country spoken by the mass will root out every other, however superior, that is used by the enlightened few. So it is with the native cherries. The tree is graceful, with a brighter green than usually enlivens the forest scenery; but the home reader, when he visits Australia, must not expect any further resemblance, either in the tree or its little ash-looking berry, to the popular prototype of the other hemisphere.

With these trees, in place of the usual leaf, there is a prolongation of the branch, which, being soft and green, gives at a distance the effect of foliage. The she-oak (Casuarina) makes excellent firewood, and has already on this account totally disappeared from many settled parts of the country. A few old and shattered stems of this tree were preserved with some difficulty by the late Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Latrobe, on Batman's Hill, at the western extremity of Melbourne, and with their wiry foliage they still sigh to the passing breeze, like a funereal dirge on the disappearance of the things that were.

The other conspicuous members of the forest are the

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silver wattle, a species of acacia, whose bark was largely exported some years since for tanning purposes, —a business, however, which did not answer; the blackwood (Melanoxylon), which inclines to moist lands; the stringy bark, whose name suggests the ready means by which the bush fires rush up to the summits of the lofty stems, and whose easily stripped sheets are used alike by aborigines and colonists for roofing the wigwams and huts they respectively erect. The tea-tree (another liberty with names), forms a large proportion of the dense small forest scenery called "scrub," which is quite an Australian feature, although decidedly of the unattractive kind: it rises chiefly in marshy situations. Another kind of the scrub is formed by the mallee, a small species of Eucalyptus, which covers many thousands of square miles of the dry and sandy district of the Wimmera.

The Australian forest is not exhausted in such a brief description, but other subjects press on for consideration. The character of the subjacent soil may often be indicated by the kind of trees it sends up. The red gum is the great monopolist of the better soils, where occasionally he reigns alone: the comparative fertility and moisture enjoyed in the numerous deep river channels have usually the effect of lining their banks with this tree: the middling soils he still shares with many rivals. The stringy bark, rising from the poorest quartzy ridges, and possessing them nearly all to himself, is availed of by the numerous gold-miners, who slab their pits with the readily splitting timber,

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and cover their rude dwellings with the bark. The wood of these and other trees is now extensively applied to economic uses. Articles of furniture are made from the blackwood, red gum, she-oak, and tea-tree; and from the stringy bark and other members of the forest is derived the "split stuff," a large item of early colonial commerce, for contributing the posts and rails, the paling and the roofing shingles, until stout hedges have grown up, or the increased means and taste of the people can substitute slate roofs and stone walls.

Australia, which shows many positive qualities very peculiar to itself, is equally remarkable in a negative sense. As compared with other continents this one is distinguished for what it has not. The rivers and mountain ranges are dealt out over its spacious area with a sparing hand. Its population of animals, including man, is unusually sparse, and there is scarcely any natural product of the vegetation worthy to be classed as an article ministering to human food. Victoria is, perhaps, more favoured in these respects than other parts of Australia, although still manifesting much of the negative feature. The southern headlands stretch into the cool ocean to the latitude of 39°; and the snow-clad summits of the Gipps Land Mountains, between six and seven thousand feet in elevation, supply the perennial streams of the considerable watershed of the Murray. But the great proportion of those river courses, or creeks as they are locally termed, that present on our maps so formidable an array of riverage, are mere dry beds whose streams have ceased during summer and

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autumn, although perhaps presenting many an impetuous torrent after a heavy rain-fall in winter or spring. But these casual torrents appear to provide their own remedy against a dry and uncertain climate; for to their agency, conjoined with the desiccating influences of the climate upon the ground, are we to attribute the compensating system of the water-holes, by which natural arrangement extensive areas of country, where running water may have entirely ceased by the drought of summer, are yet overspread as with a network of natural reservoirs occupying the numerous sheltered hollows of its ravines and valleys.

Returning to the peculiarities of animal life, the kangaroo leads off the van of the singular group. He is the giant of his congeners, and the elephant of Australia. The old man, as the largest species is called, attains a height of six feet, measured while he rests at ease upon his tail and haunches. Both this and the various lesser species have already made a far retreat from those parts of the colony that have acquired a degree of settlement beyond that of mere squatting. A kangaroo hunt, so familiar to the early colonist, is now a remote and difficult pleasure. The massive tail is still esteemed a delicacy when made into soup, and a rival of the famed ox-tail. The future trade of Australia may comprise this fancy article of food, packed in those hermetical tins of modern invention that can now convey in interminable supply, and fresh almost as from the shambles, the delicacies of either hemisphere to the appreciating mouths in the other.

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But Victoria has not proved very conspicuous, as far at least as regards the taste of her colonists, for the variety or excellence of her natural cuisine. The young kangaroo is the colonial venison, with a spicier flavour perhaps, but with quite as limited an appreciation as that at home. A kind of bustard, under the fanciful name of a native turkey, is not rarely on the colonial table, and is of passing merit in the absence of the genuine article. Fish exists in the Victoria seas, but their qualities for food are not for an instant to compare with those of the European waters. The few natural fruits of the country, their meagre size and unenticing flavour, are just as nature has given them, without the slightest aid from the tillage of man; the kangaroo apple, having the appearance of a Cape gooseberry; the native apple, scarcely larger than a pea; the quondong, a kind of meagre plum with a round punctured-looking stone; the native cherry, a small orange-coloured fleshy substance growing out from its seed,—are never made use of by the colonists excepting from curiosity, or in the absence of those varieties of infinitely superior productions which they have themselves imported into the colony, and which grow so freely and will soon exist so plentifully upon the Australian soil.

But we shall more fairly judge aboriginal Australia, as to the adaptation of her natural productions, by the satisfaction they afford to her aboriginal people, who appear to have long revelled alike on the fruits, the fish, and the flesh, with festive interludes of snakes, toads, a

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variety of small reptiles, and a savoury world of worms, grubs, and caterpillars.

While the latitude of Victoria is the most southerly, and the climate therefore the most bracing, and perhaps on the whole more suitable to the British constitution, it is at the same time the most variable of that of any of the sister colonies. The hot winds of summer are here more frequent and even more severe than in parts of Australia nearer the line; but they regularly terminate with cool southerly breezes, as though the one were the unfailing cause of the other, and they seldom endure for a period that produces on the system any permanent inconvenience. It is no uncommon spectacle in summer to have the thermometer at 100° at midday, and in the afternoon or evening at 60° or 65°, with a fire in the sitting-rooms to relieve the suddenness of the change. Notwithstanding this changeableness, the climate is on the whole an agreeable one, being cheerful and pleasant from the large proportion of clear and sunny weather.

How far it agrees with the European constitution in a comparison of the relative value of human life, is a point that has not yet been decisively pronounced upon. In the modern universality of life assurance, it is a point of information frequently inquired after; and as arrangements have recently been made in Victoria for an effective registration system, we may hope that, as regards that country at least, some valuable data will be gradually accumulated. The general impression, which accords with my own idea, is that life has less value

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than in Britain. The proportion of death in middle life seems beyond that of home, even allowing for the large proportion of adults in the colony. But whether the climate and country are at fault, its former vocations, or its more recent gold-mining business, or that it is only the temporary habits of its white population, is yet to be ascertained. Englishmen cling long to everything English, whether suitable or unsuitable to the new scene in which they move.

The climate naturally suggests some changes in the diet, clothing, and habits of the good old models that suit the home latitudes. But as yet the rule has been rather reversed, for the ample means of all classes have led to indulgence, to which few were accustomed even in a climate that was less hostile to it. Not a cottage, however unpretending, but there issues in summer and in winter, "from morn till noon, from noon to dewy eve," the sound and savour of the beef steak or the mutton chop so well known to English senses. In the fiercest noonday sun, the beaver hat, that curious culmination of modern fashion, is still the conspicuous object in our streets; although a vigorous and we hope increasing minority have entered on a patriotic warfare against it, with the aid of a variety of contrivances on the difficult question, suggested by Indian and other tropical experiences. And under the same adverse influences our incautious countrymen will quaff the oft-replenished glass in a measure that would be injurious in any climate.

The residents of countries of a lower latitude than

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Britain are distinguished by their comparative moderation in the use of strong drinks; but our Anglo-Saxon race seems to be stimulated in the contrary direction. The most conspicuous articles in the import lists of Victoria, are spirits, wines, and beer. Cadiz, Oporto, and Cognac, are now alive to the value of their Australian customer, whose alcoholic tastes have stimulated all the wine markets, and sensibly affected the present reduced supplies. Melbourne is a most pretentious capital, if the estimate be correct, as I believe it to be, that she consumes more brandy than London.

I conclude this chapter with some particulars extracted from the General Cemetery Returns for the city of Melbourne, from 1st January to 31st December, 1854. They may be useful in illustrating the relative mortality of different seasons of the year, and of children and adults.

Under the age of	1	2	5	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	Unknown.	Total
Males -	552	222	105	44	63	319	284	150	76	21	9	2	164	2011
Females	482	207	108	47	57	148	115	50	30	7	7	-	38	1296
Total -	1034	429	213	91	120	467	399	200	106	28	16	2	202	3307

These returns refer to the new cemetery only: besides these numbers, a few have been interred in the old burial-ground nearer the town, of whom there is here no record.

The population of Melbourne, by census of April,

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1854, was 53,235, and of the suburbs 23,330, making a total of 76,565. But it is not safe to assume the above table as comprising all the interments. In the suburbs there may be at least a portion made elsewhere. The population of the colony for that year was 236,798, of whom there were under 15 years, males, 30,996, females, 30,383; and under 5 years, males, 12,901, females, 13,065.

The mortality returns are made up as monthly, and show the proportion of deaths in the different seasons. The infant mortality appears strikingly large in the summer months, particularly the middle and later months, January and February. This difference is not regular or striking beyond five years. The proportion of deaths in infancy is greatest among females; while that in middle life is greatest amongst males.

The following are the deaths of all ages monthly.

Months.	Males.	Females.	Total.
January -	305	212	517
February -	245	152	397
March - -	239	154	393
April - -	165	109	274
May - -	161	110	271
June - -	120	68	188
July - -	105	69	174
August - -	161	70	231
September -	115	64	179
October -	96	74	170
November -	144	94	238
December -	155	120	275
	2011	1296	3307

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CHAP. III.

VICTORIA COLONIZED.

Abortive Convict Settlement in 1803.—Hume and Hovell's Expedition, 1824.—Permanent Settlement, 1834-5.—Progress.—Separation of Colony from New South Wales in 1851.—Gold Discoveries same Year.—Their great Effects.—British and Foreign Populations.—Aborigines, Germans, Americans, &c.—Chinese, their great Numbers and Peculiarities.—Legislative Obstructions to their Ingress.—The Chinese Question.

HAVING glanced at the aspects of this new abode, let us next take a survey of its present occupants; and, in what they have accomplished during their brief tenancy up to the year 1857, anticipate what the larger future may bring about.

My chief object being to depict Victoria, not as she was, but as she now is, I shall not trouble the reader with long narrations of early history. These have been correctly and copiously given by the industry of Mr. Bonwick in his recent publications.

But the first efforts at the colonization of this country are curious in their contrast with the success of the second. The first attempt was to found a penal settlement on the southern shore of Port Phillip in 1803, the

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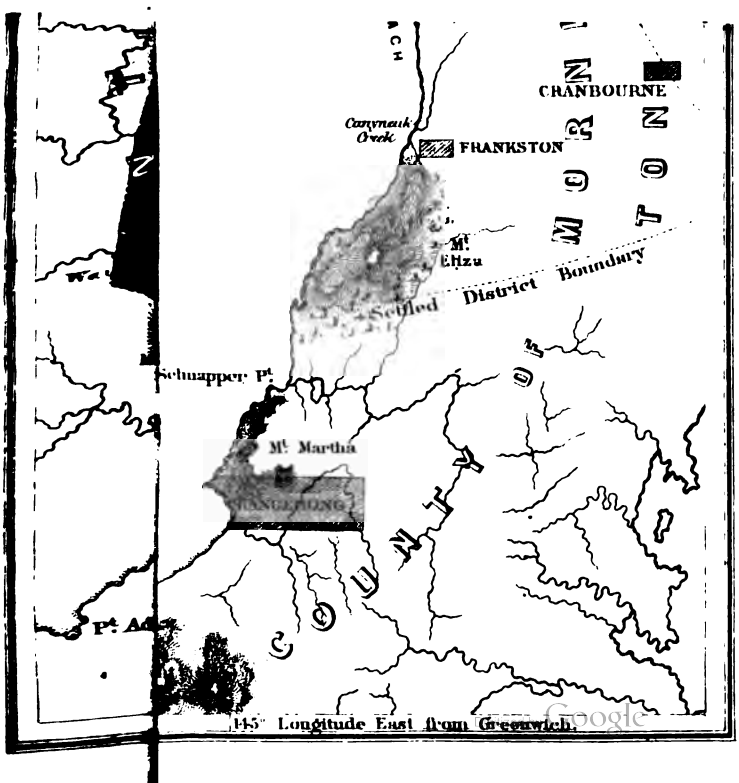
CRANBOURNE
Canyenaik Creek
FRANKSTON
Mt Eliza
District Boundary
Settled
Schnapper Pt.
Mt Martha
COUNTY OF MORNINGTON
Pt Ad
145° Longitude East from Greenwich.

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year succeeding the discovery of that fine inlet. And the reader, by the way, may well mark that this harbour, whose spacious waters are now furrowed by the ships of all commercial nations, was actually unknown even to geographical curiosity within this nineteenth century! The convict settlement was abandoned the following year; and for upwards of thirty years more we hear nothing of Port Phillip and its surrounding territory, excepting in the adventurous expedition of Hume and Hovell in 1824, and a second abortive effort at convict settlement, about two years afterwards, at the eastern entrance of the large inlet adjacent to Port Phillip, called Western Port. Meanwhile the first convict party which had been transferred to Hobart Town founded the great penal system of Van Diemen's Land, where Britain, until her recent change of criminal policy, has been lavishing her treasures to rear up a terrible edifice of concentrated human vice; and where, by the facility afforded for the prompt ejection of her criminals, she has learned too well to evade the troublesome lessons of Providence which might otherwise have been effectual in directing her attention as much to the prevention as the detection of crime.

The expedition of Messrs. Hume and Hovell is worthy of a passing notice, as the first overland journey between New South Wales and Port Phillip. The hardships and difficulties of the untrodden route — the gigantic solitudes of huge forests and expanded plains — comprise a curious retrospect, and furnish an enlivening

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contrast with the present day. For more than ten years a semi-weekly post has been traversing this territory, only thus recently explored, to meet the wants of the city and settlements that have already arisen upon its southern border. Where Hume and his party struggled in a strange land to cross the streams of the Murray and the Ovens, there is now the corporate town of Beechworth, in whose vicinities twenty thousand busy hands gather the mineral wealth of the new land. The steamboat already moves at their once solitary crossing-place on the waters of the Murray; and the chart of the country shows that railways are already marked out, in preliminary surveys, for the future traffic. And yet but thirty-three years have elapsed since these travellers launched forth into the unknown wastes of the South and West. To complete the satisfaction of the picture, both of the enterprising explorers who headed the expedition are still alive, to enjoy, by a comparison they are well qualified to make, the spectacle of progress around them.

The idea of this expedition appears to have originated in a wish expressed by the then governor of New South Wales, Sir Thomas Brisbane, to ascertain if any important rivers passed through the country lying to the southward and between Sydney and Bass Strait. Mr. Hume intimated his willingness to undertake the journey, but differed from the plan suggested by the government of penetrating inwards from Cape Howe. An offer of his own, to start from the southern outposts of the New South Wales settlement, was declined, as

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the authorities could not spare the requisite cattle. Mr. Hume soon after undertook the journey mainly at his own charges, and describes his sacrifice of a fine plough in order to raise sufficient funds. He was joined by Mr. Hovell, another colonist, who had manifested an inclination for the adventure. It was indeed, as has been already stated, a very considerable adventure in those days; the country they proposed to go through being an absolute *terra incognita* to all but its aboriginal savages.

With a party consisting in all of eight persons, a couple of carts, and sundry stores of flour, tea, sugar, &c., the travellers left Lake George on the 3rd of October, 1824. Their instructions were to proceed as straight as possible to Western Port. In endeavouring to accomplish this route, they came upon the snow-clad Australian Alps, whose westerly bearing induced them to deviate considerably in the same direction. An early difficulty occurred in crossing the river Murrumbidgee, whose waters, as usual during the season of this visit, were swollen with winter and spring rains.

After great fatigues and a circuitous march, the shores of Port Phillip were reached on the afternoon of the 16th of December at a place ten or twelve miles east of Geelong. The next day they pitched their camp on the site of that town. Some natives, who pursued one of the party, were afterwards induced to visit the camp. These persons intimated by various signs that white people in ships came to a neighbouring place

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to cut timber. They pointed in a direction S. by W., and made a motion like the sawing of wood. There was more confirmation given to this story the following day, when the party, then on their return course, and about sixteen miles from the site of the present Geelong, thought they heard the discharge of a cannon. For some time it was discussed whether they had not better turn back to inquire into the case, but eventually they pushed on homewards. In this countermarch their experience enabled the party to take a more direct line. In their outward expedition they had traversed 670 miles of country; their return journey was reduced by 150 miles, and accomplished in one month from the departure from Geelong to the arrival at Mr. Hume's station at Gunning.

Many free settlers had arrived in Van Diemen's Land, who colonized the country in common with those obscurer fellow-colonists who had emerged from the bonds of His Majesty's service, either as "expirees," or with the privilege of a "ticket-of-leave." From this mixed population the colony of Victoria was first permanently settled. The report of an open grassy country around Port Phillip, first given by Flinders in 1802, afterwards confirmed by Hovell and Hume, who had penetrated, as we have seen, as far as Geelong, and repeatedly afterwards alluded to by whaling-parties and others on passing visits, began to attract the attention of these Van Diemen's Land settlers, so soon as the limited pasturage of their own island proved inadequate to the support of their increasing flocks and herds.

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Launceston, the northern part of the island, was the general rendezvous and starting-place, and the new El Dorado soon acquired such favour that the mania of the day took the name of the Port Phillip fever. In 1834 the fine pastures behind Portland Bay, in the extreme west, were occupied by the sheep of several colonists, who thus simultaneously gave the first commencement to the colonies of South Australia and Victoria. It was in the following year that the first permanent settlements were made at Port Phillip.

In the year 1836 colonists began to traverse, with increasing facilities, that long route which a dozen years before had proved so formidable a wilderness to the two travellers just alluded to. They brought with them their flocks and herds, their dray-loads of stores and teams of bullocks; and soon a track was marked out which connected the northern metropolis of Sydney with "the settlement," as Melbourne was then called, in the new country. In that year, too, the late Sir Thomas Mitchell made his exploratory tour, and distinguished the fine pastoral landscapes of the northern district by the title of Australia Felix. Soon the fame of Port Phillip reached England, and within an interval of two years, capital, commerce, and population, alike streamed in from that quarter also.

The new country was claimed by the New South Wales government, as forming part of their colony; and in 1837, the governor left Sydney to visit this remote outpost of his large dominions. He approved of the sites which had previously been fixed upon for

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the principal towns, and named them respectively, Melbourne, Williamstown, and Geelong; the last a native appellation, the two others in compliment to the premier and sovereign of the day. The land sales commenced in the middle of 1837, when Melbourne half-acre allotments found buyers at an average of about 40*l.* each. But these prices quickly improved as more men and more money arrived, and many fortunes were made during the interval of rising values. When a census of the people was taken in March 1841, the district contained between 11,000 and 12,000 colonists; of which number about 4500 maintained an active existence of mingled business and land speculations in the scattered village of Melbourne.

The next era is the separation from New South Wales; a stirring theme for Port Phillip patriotism, and one on which every argument was exhausted. The separation movement had dragged its slow length along for some ten years ere the object was attained. The 1st of July 1851 was the auspicious day; and auspicious truly it proved, in connexion with the events that quickly followed, through the discovery of the gold-fields in the course of the same year. Mr. La Trobe, who had been sent from Sydney, as local superintendent, in 1839, was promoted to the governorship. He was sworn in, under the title of lieutenant-governor, under an arrangement which contemplated a governor-generalship located at Sydney; but not with the view of any active interference on the part of the New South Wales government with the ordinary affairs of

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Victoria, or the other colonies of the group. Since the recent imperial concession of self-government to these colonies, their respective heads have enjoyed the title of governor.

The high compliment of the name of Victoria, awarded to the rising young colony on the occasion of its detachment from New South Wales, extinguished the rivalry about that of Australia Felix. At this era, the colony, after a short but prosperous course, had attained to a position of consideration among the many colonies of our country. By the census of March previous, the population had increased to upwards of 77,000. The public revenue of the previous year had risen to 261,000*l.*, and the value of the export produce to 1,042,000*l.*, which included eighteen millions of pounds weight of fine wool. Contentment was reflected from every countenance of the assembled crowd on the occasion of the ceremonials of the 1st of July of the year 1851.

The legislature of the newly-constituted colony assembled in November, to proceed with a modest budget for the succeeding year, 1852, framed, as was usual in such cases, upon the results of the current and the previous year. The mines already told of their marvellous riches; but the ideas of the future of the colony were as yet but poorly realised, and nearly all the employing interests were embarrassed in their vocations for the time, by the general desertion to the world-famed fields of Ballarat and Mount Alexander. The expenditure was framed on the ideas of the pre-gold

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era; 600*l.* was the salary of the great officers of state. The colonial secretary (the local premier) rejoiced in the distinction of 900*l.*, and the speaker was content with 400*l.* The other items consorted with revenue expectations of 300,000*l.* to 400,000*l.* a year. When the accounts were finally rendered for the revenues of 1852, they were found to have jumped up to more than a million and a half sterling.

The first surprise over, however, the colonial government were easily familiarised with the expenditure of public money. Two years have scarcely elapsed, ere they are rushing upon difficulties by an expenditure far beyond their means. In 1854, although the revenue had risen to more than three millions, it was exceeded by nearly a million in that year's expenditure. The application of the pruning-knife in the following year, 1855, soon righted the disorder of the finances, and at the end of 1856 the elastic colony exhibited a surplus, which now promises to be considerably augmented for 1857.

In this interval, a great colony has rapidly sprung up, consisting, for the most part, of the British people; who, therefore, give us the British aspect everywhere throughout the country, in the prevailing language, manners, and public sentiment, and in the Anglo-Saxon energy with which the whole society moves onwards in its new home. Before concluding this chapter, however, I shall allude to several other races, which have contributed minor streams to the general tide of immigration, and whose admixture may not result without

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some effect, good or bad, upon the future. I shall first glance at the poor expiring aborigines, and pass to the remainder of the foreign element, which includes the novelty of a large number of Chinese, who have been attracted to Victoria by the repute of the gold fields.

The aboriginal population within the limits of the present Victoria, probably did not exceed, if indeed it equalled, 20,000 to 25,000 souls, when the country was colonized twenty-two years ago. But small as this number is, in a country of eighty-seven thousand square miles in extent, agreeable in climate, abounding in natural resources, and generally attractive in its scenery, it is a host as compared with what this population has now been reduced to by the irruption of the white man. The estimates of the numbers of the aborigines have been successively reduced at each census, until they now stand at 2500 for the whole of Victoria; this handful of a remnant being confined chiefly to the inaccessible parts of Gipps Land, and to the banks of the Lower Murray, skirting the north-western district, where the desert of mallee scrub renders the land useless to the colonist.

A good many natives were met with by the first-arrived settlers in 1835. Some amongst their number appearing to have the status of chiefs, a bargain was struck for a very tolerable principality, which these "native kings," as the ready colonial nomenclature might have styled them, were quite willing to sign away to their white allies, in consideration of a present supply of tomahawks, blankets, and flour, and a future

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annuity of the same attractions. This bargain, however, was not sanctioned by the government, who did not recognise any title in the land as at the disposal of a people who neither made use of the soil nor appeared to hold any individual proprietorship.

Our countrymen found the aborigines to be parcelled out into a number of separate and distinct tribes, each of which, by the custom or consent of a long retrospective age, occupied a particular district; and each tribe gratified the unsettled habits of the race by wandering throughout this territory. There were the tribes respectively of Western Port, the Yarra, the Barrabool, the Loddon. A comparative host of tribes lined the banks of the Murray, and occupied the recesses of the great districts of the "stony rises" in the country from Lake Corangamite to Mount Eeles. From these last positions they often, in the earlier times, sallied forth to capture sheep and cattle, and even attack the shepherds and settlers, until effectually silenced by the destructive attacks and retaliations of the colonists.

There were occasional large gatherings of these tribes, where ceremonials of dancing and music, if their monotone time-beating may be so dignified, were conducted. One of these gatherings of the Australian clans took place thirteen years ago in the vicinity of Melbourne, and exhibited about 700 natives male and female; each tribe seeming to have met for the purpose of performing, the one to the others in succession, their corrobbery or native dance.

It is now too well established that infanticide and

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cannibalism are among the things authentic that pertain to our common humanity. Our society may be excused for enjoying a long-continued scepticism on this subject that Australia has mercilessly dissipated. But, in truth, these revolting features are common to other races than the degraded Australian. Polynesia furnishes a curious contrast between the beauty of nature and the hideousness of man. Under a brilliant sky and amidst a gorgeous landscape, where the sun's rays dance among sparkling coral beds beneath the bright waters, and the waves are gently murmuring over the sand and shells that skirt the vast and placid ocean — amidst these scenes of an earthly paradise the human savage seems especially active to darken the picture of joyous existence. Both cannibalism and infanticide prevail in the grossest forms amongst the aboriginal Australians. In these practices there is a diversity amongst different tribes, arising from customs that tradition or superstition has introduced. It is perhaps to the strength and peculiarity of such traditional practice and sentiment that we are to account for parental affection in association with customs so antagonistic. It is common to sacrifice the female infant, particularly a first-born. The wandering mode of life will not admit of many young children in a family, and over-burdened mothers appear at no loss for relief —no loss as regards either the laws of their tribe or their own feelings.

The custom of eating human flesh has some curious varieties of feature. The kidney fat of an enemy

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seems a savoury morsel in every aspect of the case. There is a rude but summary dealing with the unfortunate victim, who is left to perish or survive after the painful operation. A poor spectral-looking creature whom I once met with in the interior, had been thus dealt with and had survived, probably from the imperfect abstraction of so vital a portion. There is a custom of eating the bodies of members of the tribe, particularly the young, who die from natural causes. A mother and her children have been seen to devour complacently the youngest member of the group. Bodies loathsome with disease have been devoured with voracity. But we may now pass to less odious aspects of our aboriginal fellow men.

Each tribe usually numbered from 200 to 300 individuals; a few had more, and some less. Some tribes had friendly relations with others; but in general they were actuated by feelings of mutual hostility, and for one tribe to enter the time-honoured boundaries of another was usually tantamount to a declaration of war. The seclusion of this system was well illustrated in the numerous dialects and differences of the common language, which would render some adjacent tribes unable to converse with one another even if they had been so inclined.

To this feature we may trace one cause of the rapid disappearance of these aborigines. As each step of colonising progress came upon a fresh tribe, the native could not preserve his social integrity by retreating to his fellow aborigines in the background, nor these in turn

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to still deeper recesses, as the tide of civilisation pressed upon them. He preferred at least to remain with the whites; first with some show of fight and manliness, but soon to sink into a total degradation, compared with which the original condition of the tribe was one of national virtue.

A few would attach themselves to the homesteads of the settlers around them. Many were attended to by an Aboriginal Protection Establishment supported by the government. Various missionary plans were for some time at first in operation. And yet it would now appear, after every agency of this kind has all but ceased, that these various means could neither permanently change the aboriginal mind, nor even save the race from extermination under the noxious influence of the white man's presence. The stimulus of the usual mode of life was at an end; and the poor aboriginal, burdened with a motiveless existence, sank into sloth and dissipation: the latter being too often encouraged by the thoughtlessness of the colonists. Whatever object life presented to his mind formerly has now disappeared, and it has not been replaced by anything good or inspiring taken from the white. The increase that must replace the natural decay soon falls off, and aboriginal infants and young children are now scarcely to be met with in Victoria. The ravages of disease, introduced by the white population, fill the cup of misery to the black. A few more years and our sable brother of Victoria will have entirely disappeared.

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Since the fame of her gold fields has gone abroad, Victoria has been an object of attraction to well nigh the whole world; from whose various races and nations she has received into her society some few or more representatives. Little of this mixture occurred prior to the gold era. The only foreign immigration of any noticeable amount at that time, was from Germany; which our own government, to a certain extent, encouraged, with the view of introducing persons accustomed to vine training and wine making. Above a thousand Germans arrived in 1849 and 1850, and many have been since added to this first stock. They are now found in every part of the colony, mining, farming, gardening, and dairying, in common with other colonists. They have established a newspaper, which is published weekly in Melbourne; and some of the more highly educated, and of scientific tastes, have made themselves useful in exploring the interior, and collecting the curious and still imperfectly known natural objects of the country.

One of the earlier settlements of the first party, made upon a section of a square mile of land ten miles to the northward of Melbourne, exhibits the pleasant spectacle of an orderly variety of social life in the colony, and of the success attending the industry and well known frugality of this people. There are above a hundred Germans on this section, who revel alike in the plenty of British Victoria and the luxury of still clinging to everything German. From everything purely British, a few steps transfer you as it were to Germany. The

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women are busy in the fields, with their German caps, their broad comely faces, and their broader guttural tongues. They rejoice in nothing so much, as those everlasting difficulties of the English language, that have hitherto prevented their learning it. The garments of male and female are German, and so are the houses, which are even more impregnated than in Fatherland with the cherished tobacco odour; and there is a little German church perched on an eminence, where a German sermon is heard as opportunities contribute a preacher.

The section consists of a good soil, and the situation is favourable in regard to a market; for at any time in the course of three hours the thrifty housewife can have all her accumulations of milk, butter, eggs, and chickens, converted into hard cash at the inexhaustible Melbourne market; and that too at prices unknown perhaps anywhere else in the world. All are said to be doing well, and several are already reputed wealthy. I visited this comfortable spectacle of colonial life shortly before leaving the colony. Considering the strength of home sickness in the Germans, these settlers paid the best compliment to the country, when they assured their visitors that they had no wish but to live and die in Victoria.

Respecting the number of the German people in Victoria, I observe that under the head Religion, in the census of April, 1854, there is a return of 3014 as of the Lutheran persuasion, to which for the most part the German colonists belong. Making a small addition

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for Catholic Germans, and on the other hand a minuter deduction for Lutherans other than Germans, we may compute the numbers of 1854 at 3500. During the three years' interval that has since elapsed, these have probably increased to 6000. Parties of them have occasionally come across from South Australia, to which colony they had emigrated in large numbers some years before their attention was directed to Port Phillip, and where they now form one-tenth of the whole population.

The event of the gold discoveries soon imparted a marvellous and unwonted variety to the social aspects. The first surprise and curiosity had brought so many together at one time from all ends of the earth, that for a space of more than two years the streets of Melbourne were as crowded as the London thoroughfares. The old colonist, who had hitherto contrived to digest the progress around him, was now lost in a wilderness of strange countenance and attire. Upon ground he once paraded as his own, he was now indiscriminately elbowed by every parvenu; and that too in spite of a venerable mist of antecedents which, at 500 years' distance at least, if not at the fifty he could bring to his aid, might have secured him a position in any place less imaginative than a bustling colony.

The first contributions were from the adjacent colonies, whose employing interests were panic-struck by the wholesale desertion of the working-classes. From the copper mining districts of South Australia, many betook themselves to the more attractive metal in Victoria, and formed a class who were very successful

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at gold mining. Remoter colonies, North America, the Cape of Good Hope, and elsewhere, sent their quota. European nationalities formed the rear of the long train. Frenchmen arrived, under the stimulus of an increasing brandy and claret trade. A large party of Italians was more than once met with, journeying upwards on the great highway to Mount Alexander. The important commerce with the United States brought quite a cluster of merchants from that go-ahead country, who occupy a particular part of Melbourne, with a consulate in their midst, whence the stars and stripes float gaily in the breeze. They muster regularly a patriot band on the immortal 4th of July, and, with the usual contradiction, commemorate a hero great in everything, but greatest in his simplicity, with the most flowery of orations. They are just three days later than a like periodical rejoicing, which recalls to the crowing Victorians another separation and independence, and suggests to them, with respect to the old Sydney alliance, what Brother Jonathan has long prophesied of England, that the younger people are to surpass the senior.

I have alluded, hitherto, only to the foreign immigration of European races. An accession from a different quarter has surpassed all these in its numbers as well as peculiarity. The Celestial Empire has already overspread the country with the yellow faces of its subjects; and it is estimated that not less than 30,000 Chinamen are now in the colony, nearly all of whom are scattered over the various gold fields. They are

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not, however, entirely restricted to these districts. In traversing one of the long minor streets of Melbourne, one is suddenly encompassed by the strange faces and scenery of Mongolia. Unintelligible jargon, and boards bestrewn with uncouth lettering, tell to the initiated all the attractive tale of fine qualities and great bargains that ever emanates, and with equal truth, from the similar establishments of smart business Christians.

The tide of Chinamen began with the year 1854; the census of April of that year giving 3000 Mahometans and Pagans, of whom, probably, the best half was Chinese. By the end of the year they were estimated at 10,000. Their large and increasing numbers were first seriously adverted to by the Royal Commission appointed about this time to inquire into the condition of the gold fields. The hives of dusky faces that met the astonished commissioners at every principal gold field brought a grave social question to their consideration.

Some Chinamen asserted that their countrymen were "all coming" to the gold; and the influx continued so large that the legislature, in some fear lest the colonists should be absorbed like so many needles in a Chinese haystack, imposed a restriction on their immigration. Every Chinaman was to pay on arrival a fine of 10*l.*, and no ship could bring more than in the proportion of one to every ten tons of her register. By this means it was hoped that the strength of the inpouring stream would be broken. And this effect the measure probably had, for the immigration fell off sensibly; being carried

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on upon a small scale by way of the adjacent colonies, which rejoiced in the traffic thus transferred to them by what they considered the commercial mistake of their neighbour. Presently, however, the stream again swelled up, and as large parties were ever marching overland from South Australia to Ballarat and Castlemaine, the question was reconsidered by the legislature, and the tonnage restriction was taken off, although the 10*l.* fine was still retained. Chinese protectors and interpreters had been provided by government, and the ostensible object of this head-money was to secure a fund for the general benefit of the Chinese: we must hope that the fund will be strictly dealt with. Of course this humane foresight could have been dispensed with had other reasons not prompted.

The immigration is chiefly of people from Canton, but some come from various parts of their empire, and speak a language that the others do not understand. One who spoke English mentioned, in evidence to the Gold Commission, that his countrymen in Victoria were of two races—the Tartars and true Chinese; the former being much the most numerous, and being also addicted to thieving and many bad practices: they scandalised the whole people. The true Chinese, to whom he, of course, belonged, were well behaved.

Between these Mongols and their European neighbours were few sympathies and many antipathies. The Chinese were the weaklier race, and were assured of the larger share of kicks, on an average, of the scrambles.

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Still, however, from cases of mutual assault between them and the European colonists that soon began to appear at the county police courts, it was seen that the large numbers of Chinamen were practically, although not with ostensible force, driving the others away. Swarming like ants, they soon make the place "too hot" for the antagonistic white race; who, if not defeated by the disappearance of the water which the numerous Chinamen rapidly absorb in their washing operations, assert that they are routed by smells and spectacles they would rather leave at a distance.

The perplexed magistrate in vain endeavours to thread the mazy merits of the case, and utters once and again the noble sentiment that when on British ground all men are alike. So much is to be said on each side, that the last speaker ever carries the day. A'Hin and A'Chin state how they were ruthlessly assailed by one John Jones, as they were quietly looking from their tents at the said John kicking up a row. John, on the other hand, testifies that passing through the Chinese quarters towards dusk, accompanied by a friend, the latter, who had been indulging in a "nobbler" extra and had in consequence dropped somewhat astern, was set upon by A'Hin and A'Chin and a dozen others, and soon roared for his life under the blows of picks and spades and a shower of Chinese curses. John, who has fortunately not enfeebled his muscles by any nobblers for that occasion, soon gives effectual support to his frail brother, and is not over nice in his administrations to the flying Chinamen. A tipsy European, it appears,

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is a kind of game that the Chinamen are always on the watch for, and whenever in their power the unlucky helpless wight comes in for the whole accumulation of wrongs since the last safety-valve of the same kind was discharged.

In the courts of justice the swearing in of a Chinese witness is a scene that usually begins with a difficulty and ends with a laugh. He will sometimes intimate he is a Christian, giving at the same time some rather hazy proofs of that position; or his counsel will have it that he knows the nature of an oath. When these trials will not suffice, the last resource is the breaking of the cup. John Chinaman is proverbially frugal; and as the authorities insist, in these mystic cases, that the expense of the devoted cup shall be borne by the Chinese themselves, one with a crack, a chip, or minus a handle is usually forthcoming, to add an extra doubt to those already entertained of the virtues of the ceremony.

Two significant circumstances have already occurred in connexion with the Chinese in Victoria. The Ballarat press informs us that on the 3rd of May, 1856, a brother broad-sheet was brought into the world under the name of the "Chinese Advertiser," and composed in the Chinese language. From the interests of literature they turned to those of religion, and in September following a Joss House raised its head. This was a wooden edifice of two stories, about seventy feet long by thirty-five in breadth, whose completion was celebrated by a great uproar of music, shouting, and feasting. It is built upon Emerald Hill, in South

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Melbourne, a favourite residence of the Chinese. An attempt to accomplish the same object had been made nearly two years before at Bendigo, but had not been carried out, although a considerable sum of money was subscribed at the time. On theological subjects I may mention that the solar eclipse of last year excited great attention amongst this people, probably in connexion with some religious notions. A general stir was visible in their encampments, and an incessant jingling of pots and pans was kept up, as was understood, with the object of frightening away the evil spirits that had bewitched the two luminaries.

The small number of females who have accompanied the Chinese is a remarkable feature of this immigration. It is a feature that has distinguished for a much longer period the British settlement of Singapore. Mr. Young, on the occasion above alluded to, said that only four women had arrived to the whole thirty thousand now estimated to be in the colony. One Chinaman had married an Irish girl, and they had a beautiful little daughter. A few other marriages of this kind are reported.

The want of the female members must disparage the immigration of any people; and it particularly applies to this exclusive race, who are accused of depravities which the domestic ties might at least greatly check. With a feature of timidity they are in general orderly, industrious, and as yet remarkably sober as to outward effects, at least from ardent spirits. Their moralities, however, seem related to the police regulations rather than the internal dictates of the head or the conscience;

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and I am not sure that the virtue of temperance is likely to prove permanent, as there is already a large consumption amongst them both of opium and brandy —a consumption very markedly on the increase.

Christian missionary efforts were directed to the Chinese as soon as the means of doing so could be availed of. The arrival from China of the Rev. Mr. Young, and several native Chinese converts, furnished the opportunity. Towards the middle of 1855 the first missionary station was formed at Castlemaine, the centre of an extensive auriferous country, comprising many of the Chinese. In the following year a branch service was organised at Ballarat, where about 5000 were engaged in mining. These stations are as yet but of humble pretensions, the place of worship at Castlemaine having cost but 20*l.*, of which the Chinese themselves had contributed 12*l.* Notwithstanding a cordial co-operation with Mr. Young on the part of the other Protestant clergy, this missionary cause had not been very flourishing. At a public meeting held in Melbourne in February of the present year, the reverend gentleman, in communicating a variety of interesting particulars, regretted the limited pecuniary support that had as yet been given: a circumstance that he feared might compel the native teachers to return to China. The prospect was, for the present at least, additionally discouraging, from the circumstance that, although many attended preaching and behaved decorously, yet that there had not been any instance that could be called conversion.

The cause had been prosecuted with much zeal.

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When the mission was established at Castlemaine the object was to induce the Chinese to attend divine worship during the leisure of Sunday. During all the six days they were busy digging and washing for gold, and they would willingly have continued through the seventh also, had they not felt afraid to contravene the general practice at the mines of resting upon that day. On the Sunday, however, they busied themselves inside their tents with domestic and personal arrangements, particularly in shaving their heads and combing out their tails. These avocations, which were probably very leisurely gone through, were not completed by the forenoon, and accordingly few would attend service at that time; but in the afternoon the attendance was better.

During the high antagonism that prevailed for a time in Victoria and New South Wales between the rural employers of labour and the rest of the public on the convict question, the former would enforce their arguments for the supply of hands that the convict system gave them, by arraigning the humanity of those who refused to open their colonial homes to the reception and reformation of their criminal fellow countrymen. Into something of this martyrising spirit a few colonists, enthusiastic in the missionary cause, are sometimes led, as they continue to hope for good results and see with pleasure a promising field of Christian labour in the Chinese inroad. It is fortunate that these aspirations are not likely to increase the objectionable stream, although they lead to the laudable and

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proper course with that part of it which has come amongst us.

A common argument for the introduction of the dark races into Australia is founded on the value of their labour power and the comparative cheapness with which it might be purchased. Prior to the gold discoveries, a number of coolies, Chinese and others, had been imported with this object into both Victoria and New South Wales. These had been employed chiefly as shepherds throughout the interior country, and in this vocation many had acquitted themselves well; although in several cases there had been most melancholy results, arising from either mutual misunderstanding between employer and employed, or the bad treatment of the one and the blind passion of the other. In the present case, however, the Chinese have no disposition to give their labour for regular wages. They all make their way to the mines, where they industriously carry on chiefly the "surfacing," or rewashing of old diggings, and realise, it is said, the large average per man of two pennyweights of gold a day, or about 7*s.* 6*d.*

The only instance as yet of a disposition to enter into other colonial labours beside gold digging and a certain extent of town mercantile agency, has occurred recently with regard to fish-curing on the coast of Port Phillip. Towards the end of last year one party of them commenced this business on the east coast of the Bay, while about the same time another was organised to the westward at Geelong Harbour near the town. Both are carrying on a brisk business, curing the fish

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in the sun and sending them off in large numbers to their countrymen at the gold fields.

The difficulty of procuring sufficient hands for the great public works upon which the colony must now enter, suggests one path of usefulness which the Chinese might be induced to try. If they could be convinced that a railway levelling would yield to each of them as many pennyweights, or even more, than result from their long labours at digging, they might be induced to explore in this new kind of mine. Their well known mode of associating under head men would facilitate such a procedure. These chiefs might make their contract with those engaged in the railway works, and afterwards make their own bargain with their countrymen; the work to be done for so much in the whole, and not for day wages. John Chinaman works admirably when every exertion is for his own behoof; but if on daily hire for others, none would excel him in the zeal with which he would ascertain and exemplify the minimum quantity of the "Government stroke."

The Chinese question has been widely discussed. Is their presence beneficial, or otherwise? Yes,—No,—and so the argument alternates, according to the class of mind or the kind of view that is brought to the subject. And so, probably, will opinion be divided to the end of the chapter, until either Victoria swarms with countless Chinamen, or those antipathies of race shown in the longer experience of California have chased every pigtail from the country.

The complaint of the miners to the commission just

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alluded to was, that the Chinamen swarmed about them like devouring locusts. Never discovering anything for themselves, never exerting themselves even to dig the holes requisite for reaching the gold deposits, or making the excavations for retaining water, they follow on the heels of others, rewashing and gleaning up everything; thus cutting off all after-resources from miners who have discovered "leads," and who, after roughly exhausting them, cannot fall back upon a rewash, because a horde of Tartars has already accomplished that duty. And so forth.

This is merely, as far as regards words, the language of prejudiced self-interest; but it exemplifies the antipathies alluded to, even although these, as in the well-known case of Dr. Fell, should appear more lively than defensible. But, after all, these extreme differences of race, which have somehow befallen the world, are a fact. As all in common are human beings, we may have an opinion that they ought to amalgamate happily, and that there ought not to be any obstacle to the development of a highly moral and intellectual society, such as the Anglo-Saxon by himself might be expected to prove. The only difference here is, that experience, such as we are likely to have it, shows this does not occur.

And why not take the Chinaman as he is? answers another. He extends our market by his purchases, is sober and industrious and a peaceable subject, and in these respects greatly better than many who boast themselves of superiority of race. Accordingly the

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trading and commercial classes, who may be supposed alive to this view, are mostly in favour of the Chinaman, and when they have been accustomed to the increase of business which his presence gives, they are very unwilling to lose him. The Bendigo miners growled at several thousand Chinamen while they occupied a considerable area of their gold field; but when the latter, after a due consultation and comparing of notes, decided on migrating to the district of the Ovens, the Bendigo community were seized with a panic, and began to think they were losing a friend.

I have partially anticipated some social considerations, to which I may return in subsequent pages. But, as the Chinese picture is one by itself, I have given all my remarks upon it when it has first come on the stage. The subject is one of interest as regards the future. The large immigration of this people will increase the commerce of the colony; and Victoria must be a place greatly given to fortune-making for all races, where so large a labour power and such a host of mouths are collected together. This is the commercial argument: to which may be added the perpetual charm of variety in the diversified aspects of our fellow-men.

But the moral bearings, although less upon the surface, are equally to be found by a little searching below it; and I fear that these are less encouraging. Are these masses of Chinamen to be privileged like other colonists, or are they to remain amongst us an inferior race—inferior alike in their collective constitution and in their political negations? Either alter-

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native has a dark aspect. Somewhat of an American difficulty looms upon our future; for although a Chinaman has more intelligence than a Negro, his people are perhaps more obstinately anti-European. Like an indigestible mass in the system of the colony, they will turn up to-morrow, and an age hence, just as they appear to-day.

The distinguishing feature of a free and enlightened society is the condition of its operative masses, whose vigour of body and originality of mind are ever rising into the superior grades to maintain the onward progress. This social aspect, which so well characterises our good Old England, the Northern States of America, and, more than any other, a thoroughly British colony, is materially altered by the large infusion of the Chinese. We cannot exactly predict what aspect time will give to the question; but, whatever form it may hereafter take, I regard our Chinese visitation as threatening our moral and intellectual greatness, and the darkest spot that has yet come upon the colonial horizon.

I think that under the threatening appearances with reference to this immigration two years ago, the legislature were justified in their step of obstruction, and still more if they intended to be faithful in applying the obstructive head-money solely to Chinese objects; but, separated from the points of view I have adverted to, such obstructions are utterly indefensible, and set so bad an example that we should not hesitate to run an

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amount of social risk to avoid them. Accordingly, as the immigration has proved much smaller than was at first conceived, I think we might have ventured back to all the integrity of our usual system, instead of the partial return made by the recent amendment of the statute.

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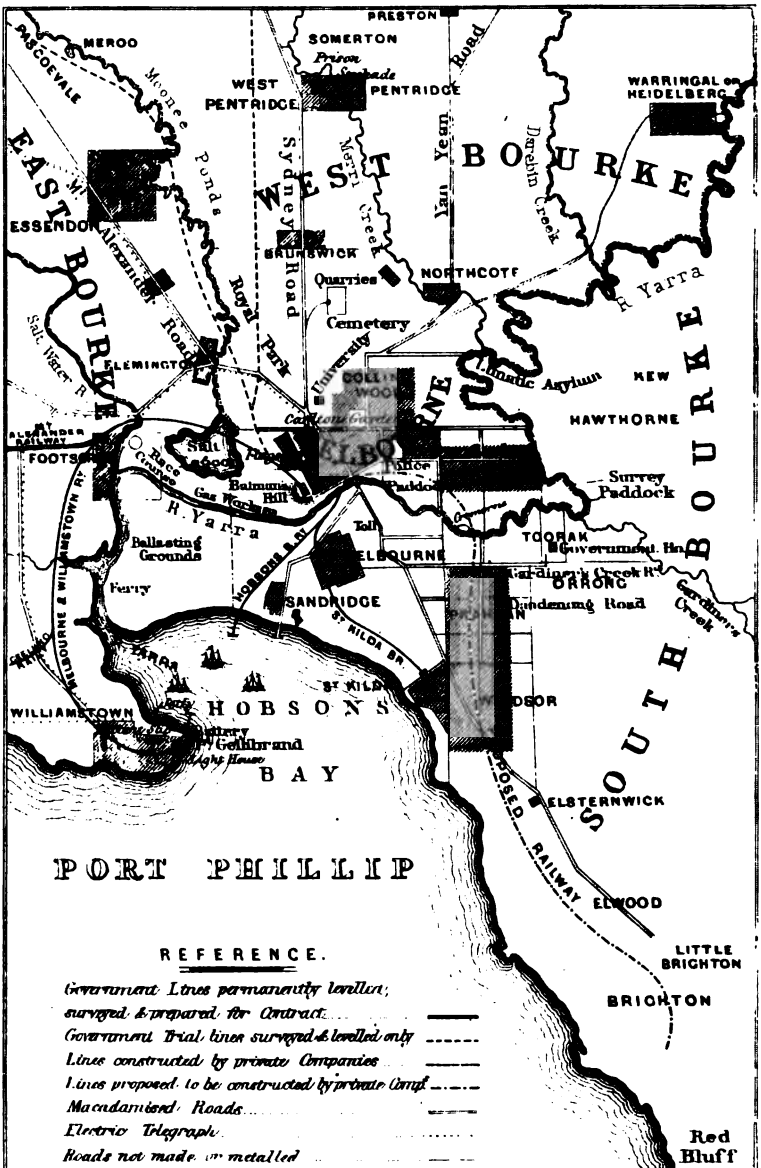

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CHAP. IV.

PROGRESS.

Costly Road-making. — Large Interior Towns. — Telegraphs. — Railways. — Improvements. — Post-and-Rail Fencing. — Little Cultivation. — Scenery. — Aspect of the Gold Fields. — Inland Towns. — Seaports. — Geelong and Melbourne. — Defects and Improvements of Melbourne. — The Corporation and its Labours. — Streets and Buildings. — Hotels. — Theatres. — Government House. — Exhibition. — University. — Railway Projects. — Government Railway Plans.

I DEVOTE a chapter to progress. The word is barely intelligible, in its colonial sense, to many a quiet Englishman, whose daily survey is a stereotyped scene of house, hedge, and highway. His ideas at sound of the word, call up the position of the daily mail coach at breakfast time as compared with the point whence at early morn it took its start, or they roam to the field which yesterday was half ploughed but to-day has received its last furrow. This too is a progress of its kind. It is that of the day's or the year's cycle. But the progress of this chapter is the first stage of a nation's journey, and the first degree of a cycle whose gauge is in the far future.

I do not know that I am the better fitted for writing

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this chapter from my having enjoyed a somewhat continuous survey of the gradations of this progress from an early stage of the race. Habit has rounded the edge of the marvel, and deprives the writer of the animation of novelty to stir up his mind. I envy the stranger who steps for the first time upon the shores of Victoria. He has a stimulus imparted to his mind by the novelties of the scene which the old residents have not, and with facility his eye detects what is peculiar and worthy of note. I have partially enjoyed such feelings myself when, after one or two years' absence in Europe, I have returned to compare the accustomed scenes of the new home with those I had just left, and with the change and progress that were manifest after the busy interval. Amusing myself once in a search for family traces in a secluded corner of the north of England, I came upon the quiet ancestral village, the moss-grown old church walls, and the babbling brook that owed to the neighbouring bleak cold hills its clear and perennial stream. There was no disturbance as yet even of the all-pervading railway. The scene was strikingly still, and even enjoyable for a season, for I had just arrived from the turmoil and extravagance of the earlier years of the gold fields. I might, in that inspiring moment, have dashed off a chapter on Australian progress, whereas I must now take a plodding course through some few of its prominent features, and thus endeavour to tell how Victoria looks.

If we assume the present population of the colony 90,000 souls, they may be distributed in the follow-

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ing manner: one-third are engaged upon the gold fields, one-third are at the seaport towns, and one-third comprise the interior town, agricultural, and pastoral population.

The gold fields have a proverbial leaning for distant localities; or is it that the digger's faith is weak unless he has reached a remote El Dorado after numberless hardships and the collection of materials for an unlimited yarn of marvellous adventures? Certain it is that no gold field of any lasting attraction has approached nearer to Melbourne than seventy-five or eighty miles. Such is the distance of Ballarat and Mount Alexander. Bendigo is one hundred, and the Ovens not much short of two hundred. The consequence of this freak of nature, if we must so term it, is to be found in the annual estimates of the government budget, where the colonial Joseph Humes are struck aghast at the annual items for road-making; and, like the home reformers with the interest of the national debt, they know not whether the expenditure set forth should be regarded as most monstrous or most imperative.

Those who are incurably impressed that the Australian is an ever droughty climate, should be entrusted, during the winter season, with that standard colonial lot, a dray and team of bullocks, a fair loading of diggers' requisites, and a mission to one of the gold fields. Whether this sceptic succeeds in getting there, whether he is permanently arrested in the Big Swamp or he and his bullocks have disappeared over the ledge of the Perpendicular Creek, he will have been equally convinced

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that there is at least a wet side as well as a dry one to the Australian picture, and that the last is immensely more convenient for many purposes of life and business than the first. So have those found this question, who, whether miners or other colonists, were scattered over the interior locations. Since the gold discoveries, the cost of macadamised roads has ranged from 3000*l.* to 6000*l.* per mile. In 1853 it was nearly 8000*l.* per mile. Three main lines are now being constructed. In the first place that from Melbourne to Castlemaine and Sandhurst (Bendigo), which is now perhaps finished as far as the former of these inland towns, and may be regarded as the principal highway of the colony. The second is the line of road which proceeds in a north-easterly direction over the New South Wales boundary and thence to Sydney, but of which it is now probably more important to say that it leads to Beechworth and the Ovens gold fields, situated at a short distance within the Victoria side of that boundary. This road is now being finished to a distance a little beyond Kilmore, or upwards of forty miles from Melbourne. The third line is from Geelong to Ballarat, a distance of fifty-eight miles, of which about one-half is finished.

We may now step into a diggings' "express" at six o'clock of a morning, and, after rather a rough excursion, we are, on the same evening, set down at Ballarat, Castlemaine, or Sandhurst. Amusing as such travelling appears in these railway times, it is a great step over the earlier days. In like manner has other travelling improved; for the smart pace of the horse

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has now greatly superseded the heavy tread of the team of bullocks of old times.

These interior localities have availed themselves of the opportunities within their reach. They comprise municipal towns, whose corporate bodies are discussing town-rates and street improvements, while an elective "Local Court" is preparing regulations for the adjacent, but extra-municipal, gold field. There are in these gold-field towns, banks and warehouses, shops where ladies demand the newest Melbourne styles, theatres, hotels, hospitals, and mechanics' institutions; while local politics and general news are circulated in a daily press. There is a brisk trade, too. Town allotments sell well for the present, but incomparably better in the imagination of the future; for although their owners do submit to accept thirty or fifty guineas a foot in the High Street of Beechworth, or in the Pall Mall of Sandhurst, still such limited prices are counted a sacrifice.

The great want is facility of communication. A cottage here bears the price of a palace in old countries, because most of the materials of which it is constructed are transported first from those countries to Melbourne, and thence to their destination by a laborious land-carriage, that adds many times to their original cost. The completion of the roads will aid this cause; but effectual help can only come by the railway, whose advent will revolutionise the colony to an extent that we can scarcely venture to calculate.

The pressing wants of these interior hives of popu-

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lation have been latterly met, in many particulars, by the aids of steam and machinery. Flour-mills have been very generally established, and, at present, there are saw-mills coming into operation, which give to the different gatherings the abundant use of the natural forests in their own vicinities. The gold fields begin to abound in steam-engines, made use of for clearing the pits of water, for quartz-crushing, and for other modes of gold seeking. The colony promises to be prolific of good stone, including an endless quantity of the hard basalt that makes the best road metal. Good qualities of building freestone are now found in many places, and made use of by the residents.

Throughout the interior, the wayside public-house is always at the traveller's convenience. The tollman, at his gate upon the macadamised road, brings up our piece of money all the lighter, we may hope, by the home associations. The electric telegraph stretches to the principal gold fields, and as we near the colonial capital, we are made aware that railways are being constructed at least, if they are not in actual operation. A short line from Melbourne to the Bay has been at work for nearly three years, and the lines to Geelong and Williamstown will be completed towards the end of the present year. The more important lines proposed to the gold fields have been marked out and surveyed, their cost estimated, and various railway apparatus ordered from Britain.

Conjointly with the term "progress" is another of large colonial use—"improvements." Both words pre-

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sent the same idea to a certain extent, "progress" being the more comprehensive word. The "improvements" are the individual progresses, which have redeemed a state of nature by works of permanence or utility. If a squatter disposes of his pastoral area, there is so much added to the value for "improvements;" which, with him, usually consist of his homesteading, fenced paddocks, artificial watering-places, perhaps, and other constructions for the facilitating of his business.

The prevailing feature of improvement throughout the colony, and the first that is usually made upon the pristine face of nature, is the post-and-rail fencing. Posts and rails, well-known articles of colonial trade, are freely supplied throughout the country, by the hard and splitting qualities of a large proportion of the natural forest. This rude-looking, but stout fencing, everywhere marks the settled country. In a few places, where stones abound on the surface, the Scotch dyke has been raised up; and elsewhere, hedges of the thorn, the native bushes, or the quickly growing acacia, have been tried; but whether from their insufficiency or costliness, they afford but a very limited variety to relieve the post-and-rail landscape.

The preliminary labours that characterise so many other colonies, in the rooting up of a primæval forest that overspreads the natural surface, are but little known in Victoria and the other Australian settlements. There are, indeed, these dense forests throughout large areas of the colony; but so great an extent of the land is

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naturally either quite clear of wood, or very lightly timbered, that it is unnecessary, for an age to come, to encounter the forest lands. In this respect the country is more healthful to the pioneering settler. The best lands are commonly those which are the least wooded; as may be repeatedly exemplified within twenty or thirty miles of Melbourne, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Geelong.

Agriculture has been rather languidly carried on in Victoria, as compared with other improvement and progress, and consequently we are so far deficient in the pleasant scenery of ploughing and stacking, of waving crops and annual harvestings. In the earlier years, when South Australia was making good progress in this branch, the superior profits and attractions of squatting took the prominent attention of the Victorians. This was only to be expected, as the fine country, open and covered with grass, was thus more immediately available. The squatting predominancy dwarfed the agricultural pretensions, and as these latter interfered with the original occupancy, the plough toiled its slow course under some disadvantages.

But whether or not from this cause, agriculture has never attained in Victoria that prestige and prevalence that the fine soils of the country would well warrant, and that every one must long to enjoy who can appreciate the charm of the country life of Old England. Since the gold era, or rather within the last three years, the public lands have been more liberally sold to the colonists: but, from the recentness of this event,

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and the wealth that is now in the country, and that has still been able to buy up and hold over on speculation most of the lands thus sold, we have still but a small portion given to the plough. At the end of last year rather more than 2,000,000 of acres had been sold, but of this quantity a very minute fraction only had been brought into cultivation. The colonist is therefore familiar with grass paddocks, and with those stoutly fenced but vacant areas that call loudly in the name of progress for a resident occupancy.

Agriculture after a long depression seemed about to make some headway when the diggings broke out. Shall we include the labours of our digging colonists in the category of "improvements," as being comprised in things permanent and useful? Permanent they are; for what Victorian traveller is not familiar with the aspect of an old gold-field, whose stamp, like that of a subterranean irruption, an age will not readily remove; and useful, too, these labours have been for their intended purpose. So if they are in themselves neither improvements nor progress, they are the means of both.

But as Victoria is extensively auriferous, to the extent, it is said, of nearly one-fifth of its superficies, the future is full of import for the aspects of the country. Here is the site of an extensive forest entirely swept away by a score thousand diggers, for firewood, rough house building, and pit slabbing purposes. The small green bushes that have sprouted from the remnant

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stumps assist to vary the monotonous relics of a deserted gold-field. The stream that once meandered through the glade and forest of its pristine valley now pursues a devious course through mounds and pitfalls that have entirely broken up the original bed. The whole adjacent area, and that for miles into each branching valley, shows the surface broken up, the trees cut down or withered. If a few of the miners still linger over the deserted ground, they are like a handful of the living bemoaning the host of the dead; for the entire scene is not dissimilar to a vast cemetery of huge and diversified grave mounds, whose well beaten highways attest to our ranging fancy the competing activity of life that must have been necessary to encounter the still greater activity of death.

From the death stillness of such a scene, only a stone's-cast perhaps brings us into the full tide of diggings' life; for we have but to cross that sterile quartzy ridge, strewed with the stumps of a stringy bark forest, and thence descend upon a thousand cradles, longtoms, puddling machines, and digging and pumping appliances, whose conjoined noise breaks on our ears like the incessant buzz of some immense manufactory. These right-angled streets and allotments on the high grounds are the township, which is as yet but scantily filled up with wooden edifices. The long irregular line of tents and slab-huts upon the flat, traverses the auriferous workings, where busy traffic has followed up the diggers, and where everything wanted in diggings' life, from a needle to a marlinespike, and from a glass of

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grog to a puncheon of alcohol, are to be had for the ready gold.

Immediately around the gold-fields the land has at length been either reserved as commonage or sold. We have, therefore, to step a little further into the bush than was necessary for a time at first, to come upon the earlier occupant of these scenes, from which he has been partially driven away by the inroads of the diggers. At some little distance, the low cottage-looking homestead of the squatter peers forth upon a rising grassy bank, whence its occupant commands a view of the broad expanse on which his flocks are grazing. The contrast is striking and suggestive. His proximity endangers the integrity of his pastoral areas, but it is favourable to the traffic in his live stock, and if he has improved his hour of advantage, he may yet effect a satisfactory balance between the antagonistic prospects.

The map of the colony is plentifully studded with little shaded squares, some of which rejoice in a distinct name, while others are as yet under the generic designation of "town reserves." If many have no names, a still greater number have no inhabitants. The reason for such an array of interior townships is generally supposed to have been the state of doubt on the part of the local government as to what was the proper course with reference to the Orders in Council of 1847, on the subject of squatting. Apprehensive that these unsuitable compilations of the Home Office, which have since raised so much battling in the colony, might convey the country bodily into the hands of the squatters, the

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Lieutenant-Governor had persuaded himself to make sure at least of these village reserves for the remaining nine-tenths or nineteen-twentieths of the colonists. But the squatters have not yet come to the enjoyment of these apprehended claims, while their "runs," as the squattages are termed, are already infested by these ominous and bristling little townships, like so many municipalities of the middle age rearing their plebeian heads upon the broad domain of their angry lord.

But towns will arise, in spite of the uproar of their congrégated human nature as compared with the quiet virtues of sheep-walk life. The half-acre allotments are knocked down to A B, and the rest of the alphabet, at the public sales of land. A publican first breaks the silence by the hammering together of his weather-board, and the dispensing of his nobblers to passing travellers. A blacksmith soon perches upon an adjoining lot, and attends to the horse while his fellow citizen looks after the man. A storekeeper, secure of two permanent customers besides the passing tide and the bush profit, is next on the ground. The little community fights manfully for progress, and in its busy imagination makes but few bones of swallowing the adjacent squatter, whose pasturage is freely cropped by the village kine, and his servants as freely seduced to the village tap. By the one party's interests the government is urged to sell the adjoining lands, and in small blocks, to attract a resident population. The interests of the other have the opposite tendency, and if he cannot arrest the sale, he will try to prevent the

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subdivision, and buy the whole, if he have the means at the upset price, in order to keep his enemies at bay.

The inland towns have yet more serious obstacles than those of their early dawn, in the expense and difficulty of procuring all the materials necessary for their progress. However, this is a question of time, and since the gold-fields have overspread the interior with population, the numerous village dots will yet all acquire their share of the chequered scenery of closely compacted human nature. There are not here the facilities that give rapid development to the seaports. But yet several of these towns promise well. Those of each chief gold-field may be said to have an attendant world already by their side, so that their progress is secure. Kilmore is not under these auriferous obligations, but occupies a fertile district on the highway to Sydney; while Kyneton, still more central and promising, with its banks, its municipality, its newspaper, its circuit of fertile lands, and its future railway junctions, will probably take the position of the agricultural capital of inland Victoria.

But as usual in colonies, the marks of progress and improvement are most conspicuous in the seaport towns, and chiefly, of course, in the capital, where all the appliances of business and the amenities of life come first to hand, whence they are scattered with increasing cost and difficulties, and in deteriorated qualities, to the other localities. Melbourne, Geelong, Portland, Belfast, and Warrambool, are the seaports of chief note. The three last, situated on the western coast, with harbours not en-

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tirely sheltered, and beyond the direction of the main stream of the interior commerce, have comparatively a small population: not exceeding, at present, for the whole, perhaps 8000 to 10,000 souls. Port Albert, in the east, stands probably for the future capital of Gipps Land, when that country takes an ascent from the pastoral state; but for the present it is of very unimportant account.

The two great town systems of the colony are Melbourne and Geelong. Both include many outlying suburbs, extending to several miles beyond their respective boundaries, ample as these are; and we thus comprise about 130,000 colonists, of whom fully three-fourths belong to the Melbourne circle. Both of these cities, (for with reference to an early future they may allowably be so called), are situated upon the fine estuary of Port Phillip, and both exemplify a rare rapidity of growth; the latter by the advantages of its position, and the former by these in some degree, but chiefly by its fortunate prestige as the capital of a wonderful colony.

New Zealand, with its copious sea-coast and mountain barriers to interior communication, offers sites for a dozen simultaneous capitals, or isolated centres of its commerce; and these have already sprung up. But in continental Victoria, one capital-site, if well chosen with reference to all future contingencies, would easily, from its natural and acquired advantages, have become the heart of the entire colony. There would thus have been one centre of commerce and of society, and one interest in common with the whole colony. But

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Melbourne was not the best site; as the existence of Geelong, a rival capital in its near vicinity, may show. There is, consequently, a divided interest and a jealous rivalry, together with a long vista of contention as to future roads, railways, and harbour improvements, that, in the difficulty of poising the even balance, may delay or defeat many useful and necessary undertakings.

Two natural sites within Port Phillip were superior for the purposes of a capital to that of Melbourne,—namely, Geelong (after the moderate difficulty of cutting through a bar at the entrance to the inner harbour), and Williamstown, where there were no such difficulties, and where a dry and level ground offered great facilities for the progress of a commercial town. The Melbourne site was chosen too much with reference to the necessities of the hour, exclusive of considerations of the future. The easy access to fresh water was the immediate consideration. A natural basin of the River Yarra expanded at the foot of a gently sloping hill; and at the upper end of this basin, whose waters were brackish by a tidal communication with the bay, flowed the full fresh flood of the Yarra in a slight fall or rapid caused by a natural ledge of rocks, and sufficient to prevent the ingress of the brackish tide.

Our Victorian experience, which is perhaps available for other places, points out two grand requisites for the capital of a new country. In the first place, facility of communication with the world without, and next the like facility as to parts and places within. The ocean ships should sail right into the heart of our capital, and

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cast their tackling at the foot of our streets. Williamstown would have best answered this purpose; while Geelong excels in being the best natural outlet to the fine fields of the northern and western interior. Melbourne is naturally inferior in both respects; but, with the favouring prestige of its being the capital, the public improvements and the wealth and enterprise of the citizens have overcome this deficiency. The export and import business has been for a time powerfully competed for by Geelong; but at length the centralisation tendencies of Melbourne have prevailed, and but a small and unimportant part of the annual commerce of the colony escapes elsewhere.

When a fleet of shipping several years ago responded to the wants of the gold-fields, their voyage of 15,000 miles terminated with facility at Williamstown. But the various cargoes were destined for Melbourne, which was only eight miles further on, but barred by the shallows of its river; and for a considerable time this last eight miles involved a combined amount of delay, expense, and damage to property, greater than the first fifteen thousand. These difficulties have been in great measure overcome. At great cost, ample wharf accommodation has been provided at Melbourne for the smaller craft that can ascend the river, as well as the numerous lighters in which the cargoes of the larger vessels are transhipped. By the short line of the Hobson's Bay Railway, which communicates directly between Melbourne and a position in the bay of sufficient depth for the larger shipping, cargoes are

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promptly unloaded and conveyed to the centre of the town. This railway has the advantage as to distance, but not as to sheltered position, over its rival that is now being constructed from Williamstown, which reaches Melbourne by a circuit of nine miles upon the northern side of the river.

Six years after the first sale of its land allotments, Melbourne was honoured with a Corporation; whose members proceeded with the spirit and vigour that, whether for the right or the wrong, is the characteristic of such popular bodies. A similar institution was at the same time bestowed upon Geelong. The worthy councillors of both places lavishly devoted valuable time to watch alike the public interests and the conduct of one another; and ever and anon startled the quiet townspeople by the scandals of party warfare. The open-drain *versus* the close-drain parties let out so many secrets in debate that the audience got bewildered between a moral and a physical sewage, that seemed equally to flow through the corporation. There was the far-off and the nigh-at-hand abattoirs' party; the party for the grand levellings, and the counterparty for "letting well alone," whose mutual wars generally ended in an uncertain succession of alterations, that, like the inch at a time off the dog's tail, may be supposed a charity in saving the agony of losing all by a single stroke.

The latest strife with the worthy councillors of the capital has been on the gas-lighting question, between the party for immediate gas, and the patriotic self-deniers who reject every flash of the insidious benefit

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till the obstinate Gas Company has reduced its prices; the said Company, in a fit of common sense, being anxious in the first place to secure a dividend. Melbourne has been supplied with gas for upwards of a year, and the street lamps have been long ago to hand; but the streets still twinkle with the good old oil, which, if it furnishes no light, has the advantage, at least, of making the darkness visible.

This common heritage of corporation strife must surely act as a general stimulant; and so we conclude that to extinguish the parties would be to end the life. We go on, therefore, to the edifying side of the picture, which represents what the Corporation has done for Melbourne. The stranger is not more surprised at the extent of so recent a creation as Victoria's capital, and the daily traffic it displays, than at the condition of its wide and numerous streets. Thoroughfares, long, straight, and amply broad, are paved, kerbed, and macadamised throughout. The condition of the town for the first two years of the gold discoveries was altogether different. With the rush of population, there were, in rapid succession, new lines of streets, unmade, but quickly occupied with ill-constructed dwellings. There was, too, the want of any sewerage system, and of supplies of water, except by cartage from the adjacent river; while a character of negligence marked every movement, as people crowded together, or hasted hither and thither, in the excitement of the times.

The old revenue scale was quite inadequate to the

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new wants, and the increased cost of labour power, with which to effect the town improvements. The increased annual value of Melbourne, although attained in 1852, was available to the Corporation only for 1853, on which occasion the five per cent. rate was levied on a sum of 639,000*l.*, instead of 175,000*l.*, for the previous year. The succeeding year's valuation gave upwards of a million and a half, and the figures have always stood conspicuously high compared with previous times; although they have fluctuated, in company with the commercial wave, after the culmination of the gold excitement.

Nevertheless, even these enlarged sources of corporation revenue would have made little impression on the mud and ruts of the Melbourne thoroughfares, when we bear in mind, that not only were so many of the streets totally unmade, but that the cost of construction was now increased threefold, as compared to what it was previously, and was about ten times greater than the cost of the same works in England. To break the neck of this difficulty, a loan of 500,000*l.* was arranged for, with the approval and co-operation of the Colonial Government, who added the guarantee of the general revenues to that of the Corporation securities. This is the famous Gabrielli Loan, so called from the negotiating agent. The same operation gave a further sum of 200,000*l.* to Geelong. These large amounts, although expended for the most part during the dear years of the gold excitement, have made a surprising change in the condition of both towns. The

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respective corporate dignitaries have thus fought to good effect, in their absorbing and gratuitous labours; although they have battled, after their own fashion, by the accompanying variety of a plentiful personal abuse. The practical energy of the trading and operative classes has ever been here most conspicuous upon the corporate benches; for the other classes that occasionally dropped in to take part, although possessed, perhaps, of superior coats and more forbearing manners, were generally astern in practical vigour. There was a consolatory reflection upon the rude turmoil and the rough manners and habiliments of corporate life, that in proportion to the fineness of the nap was the soundness of the nap on the corporation benches.

A mayor and aldermen, a town hall and turtle, these great and completing adjuncts of a respectable city, are all now to be met with in Melbourne. The most important of them all, — that, at least, which is the most uniformly acceptable, and is never the subject of a hostile opinion, — I mean, of course, the turtle, is supplied from the tropical vicinities of the Moreton Bay shores, and thence conveyed in steamers by way of Sydney, a coast line of 1200 miles, to reappear in soup and green fat at the annual hospitalities of the worshipful mayors. The Town Hall, a large, but still unfinished, edifice, illustrates, in its heavy style of dark basalt, doubtfully relieved with dingy granite, the contrariety of old English taste to the natural dictates of the joyous climate that characterises the new abode. A cab-stand of considerable extent is

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opposite the Town Hall. The carriages are large and showy, each with a pair of horses. Until lately, they were so expensive a luxury, that only diggers and the labouring classes could afford the fares. The streets and the roads to the chief suburbs are now crowded with omnibuses, in numbers not readily met with in England beyond the bounds of London. I am content to speak of the numbers, but will forbear to descant on the qualities and aspect of the motley vehicles.

The improvement in the style of buildings is as conspicuous as that of the streets. The churches have a congregating tendency, and the rival roofs and steeples rise in considerable diversity over the eastern hill of the city. Their erection has been at a cost varying from 5000*l.* to 15,000*l.*; without reference to the ground, which for the most part has been granted by the Government. Amongst these edifices of religion, towers the dark mass of the Legislative Chambers — a building which, although still unfinished in its original plan, is of large dimensions, and affords to the two Houses of its Colonial Parliament no mean splendour of accommodation. The various banking establishments are either already housed in, or are in the act of constructing commercial palaces worthy of the princely dividend they have for several years been distributing to their proprietary. The many warehouses of the merchants, solidly constructed of the bluestone or basalt so common to the colony, form a prevailing feature. Many elegant shops and private houses have arisen within the last

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three years, the display of plate glass having quite a home effect. The latter are conspicuous chiefly in suburbs to the eastward, and the colonial tenant is now thankful alike for the progress and the moderation in the times, that enable him, in the first place, to procure a house of six or eight comfortable rooms, and, next, to be charged for it not more than three or four hundred pounds a year.

While on the subject of buildings, I would remark the want of a first class hotel adequate to the wealth and business of a place like Melbourne. Certainly, if numbers will compensate for accommodation and elegance, the town is well off. The present houses of chief pretence are, with few exceptions, the extendings and patchings of the small things of old Melbourne. They savour too much also, both in smell and aspect, of the public-house; whose attractive profits, under the present restricted licensing system of the colony, will ever give the vulgar tap a consideration beyond that of the respectable hotel.

Melbourne, like all the gay world, must have its theatre. One of very moderate pretensions had existed in the pre-gold era, but the "Theatre Royal" duly loomed forth on a scale commensurate with the new ideas. The audience look upon a proscenium reputed to be not less spacious than that of Drury Lane; and although the "getting up" will not bear a very minute or comparative inspection, yet, on the whole, this establishment must rank as one of the conspicuous wonders of the young southern metropolis. Like many other

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enterprises, good and bad, this one has been conspicuous for ruining all who were connected with its construction. Reverses in the times overtook its owners ere it was completed, and the scantiness of their finances is still exhibited in the unfinished exterior.

Two smaller theatres still contend with this great Goliah. A pretentious arena, surrounded by a wooden structure and benches for fifteen hundred spectators, rejoices in the familiar name of Astley's. But although the equestrian feats we associate with that word are frequently displayed to large audiences, the Melbourne Astley's has its chief celebrity from its political assemblages. No candidate for legislative honours before the nine thousand voters of a Melbourne constituency but must appear on the stage of Astley's. Here is emphatically the "mass meeting," and the reception given to the anxious candidate by four thousand closely compacted heads of his fellow-citizens turned simultaneously upon him, is a tolerable index of the result of the subsequent poll.

A Government House had been projected upon a grand scale during the first excitement after the gold discoveries. But as the authorities in this cherished piece of proposed extravagance had not felt altogether sure that the people went with them, the estimate of the total cost of this rival palace of the antipodes had always been maintained in a sort of misty retreat behind the ups and downs of an uncertain labour market. Portion A, as shown upon specification 20, of Plan No. 10, might cost a hundred thousand or

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thereabouts. When they had thus inserted the first letter of the wedge, the thick remainder of the alphabet would by degrees be driven home. But the sounds of action, faint from the beginning, eventually died away upon the erected ears of the tax-payers, and nothing resulted but a magnificent architectural plan. By some inadvertency this highly ornate sketch reached the illustrated pages of the Home press as that of the Town Hall of Melbourne, and doubtless astonished our staid Mother at the style with which her youngest daughter led the ball of life and business at the extremity of her Empire. How was the perplexed old lady to reconcile the idea of such municipal refinement with the rude civic portraiture daily inscribed upon the Melbourne journals she received by each Australian mail? Is it then amongst these exquisite parterres, provided by the forethought of grateful citizens, that the exhausted councillors quaff the freshness of the needful air, after the ample nectar and the heavy turtle feast? And, doubtless, that portly figure approaching the lofty conservatory is some excited alderman who, from hot debates in halls within, retreats to this soothing shade, in order to allay the angry patriotism that has been evoked by his recent exposure of the conduct of a flagitious brother.

But it was now really necessary to find some suitable Government House ready made; for the first Governor, who had hitherto resided on a property of his own, acquired in earlier times, and to which he had become attached, had resigned, and his successor was on his outward passage. The place fixed upon was Toorak, the beau-

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tiful residence of a late principal merchant of the city. It is situated four miles from Melbourne, in an easterly direction, on the South Yarra Road, where the house, a commodious family mansion, commands a fine prospect of the widely spreading city. The grounds combine, with good taste, the imported plants and trees and the embellishments of art and skill with the original natural landscape.

The change of times brought by the gold is illustrated, although perhaps as an extreme case, by the bargain made for the lease of this property. It had been let, with some difficulty, above twelve months before, at the rate of 300*l.* a year, and the adventurous tenant of a house somewhat stylish at the time for the young colony, had been encouraged by the prospect of sitting rent free by the produce of the garden and grounds. Two years of the lease remained, and as a bonus for the transfer of this lease to the Government he demanded and was paid 10,000*l.* The times were expensive, as well as the notions of those who then administered the public purse, and accordingly very many more thousands were expended upon Toorak. While the ladies fret for the Toorak balls, their patriotic husbands are denouncing the unauthorised Toorak expenditure — the Toorak road at 6000*l.* a mile, the Toorak drives, the stables, the outhouses, piggeries, and henroosts, whose united amount might have erected an entire town in the old world at the antipodes.

Two striking illustrations of Melbourne progress may here be alluded to, namely, the Exhibition of Colonial

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Art and Industry, and the University, both of which were projected during the activity of the gold excitement.

The Melbourne Exhibition was opened by Sir Charles Hotham on 17th October, 1854. It was intended for the exhibition of the industry of the colony of Victoria, and was suggested by the prospect of the great Paris Exhibition of 1855, and the desire of the colonists to make a suitable appearance on that stirring occasion. 3000*l.* had been voted by the legislature to defray expenses connected with Victoria's portion of the Paris Exhibition. For the exhibition building in Melbourne 7500*l.* had been awarded — an amount, however, which has been considerably exceeded by the actual cost. The structure, which occupies a commanding site towards the western extremity of Melbourne, is of wood, painted white, conceived in an elegant and lively style, plentifully supplied with window-light, and altogether of comparatively imposing aspect. The extreme length is 257 feet, by a breadth of 90 feet and an extreme height of 50 feet, with a superficial area of 23,300 feet available for the exhibition of its diversified objects. 10,000*l.*, had been appropriated towards procuring, amongst many other subjects, a cabinet of specimens of gold. These specimens, which illustrated in every variety the auriferous products of the country in their natural state, were transmitted to the Paris Exhibition, with instructions that they should be subsequently sold, and the proceeds transferred, by way of a remittance, to the Commissioners for Emigration.

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The building still serves its original purpose, by annual or more frequent exhibitions, and the long intervals of repose are enlivened by public festivities, balls, dinners, or other non-political assemblages, and by the official levees to the loyal colonists.

The University of Melbourne forms an illustration of the ambition of the young colony. This institution was projected during the halcyon days of superabundant revenues that characterised the earlier years of the gold discoveries. It was launched forth, therefore, on a scale that afterwards proved rather more absorptive of funds than was found convenient; for the commercial reaction, that embarrassed alike government and all else, arrived just in the midst of demands for votes of funds to satisfy contracts. However, this is one of those objects that we may least regret to have been the subject of extravagance.

The ceremony of opening the institution took place in the Exhibition Building at Melbourne, on the 13th April, 1855, in the presence of the Governor, the Chancellor of the University, and other office bearers. This building was appropriated in the meantime for the public use of the professors, until the structure then in progress for the University should be completed. This latter edifice has since been completed to the extent at present required by the very limited prospect of pupils; and some idea of the style and dimensions of the complete structure may be formed from the fact that it was estimated to cost above 100,000*l.*, of which more than one-half has already been expended. There is an annual

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endowment of 9000*l.*, payable out of the general revenue. A remarkably fine site had been appropriated to this institution by the late Governor La Trobe, consisting of forty acres of land, situated on the north side of the city, and forming part of the fine and extensive recreation grounds in that place. The foundation-stone of the building had been laid, with the customary ceremonies, on the 3rd of July, 1854.

The object of this institution, as the Chancellor observed in his address, is "to promote sound learning in the colony of Victoria," and it is therefore "open to all classes of her Majesty's subjects," without any obstacle whatever as to religious tests. So soon as the graduates who have taken degrees amount to one hundred, a senate will be constituted. In the meantime the government of the University is conducted by a council nominated by the Governor, consisting of twenty members, including four clergymen of different persuasions. This council elects its chancellor and vice-chancellor. Four professorships were appointed—namely, for classics, mathematics, modern history, and natural science; and with the view of procuring competent professors the council called in the aid of several eminent persons in England, who formed an elective committee. These professors had arrived shortly prior to the opening proceedings just alluded to. One of their number—Professor Rowe, of the classical department—had died shortly after landing in the colony; an occasion upon which, with an honourable promptitude, the colonial legislature voted a sum of 500*l.* to the widow.

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The Melbourne University, like the young man of great possessions, lacks but one thing; which, as in the scriptural case, is the testing point. It has buildings, professors, and endowments, but it still wants pupils. In speaking from mere recollection, I think the opening number was fifteen; but I hope that my further impression that the number has since been diminished will only prove the uncertainty of such a record.

RAILWAYS.

The year 1852 was fertile in projects for the advancement of the colony, but conspicuous above others were the railway projects. There was at that time as much projected in this way, in the circumstances of our young colony, as her mother country exhibits in those eras of her excitement and vigour that appear every few years. But we are disappointed to look back over the long interval of five years—long in the rapid life of Victoria—and to find that after all scarcely anything has yet been effected. This year, 1852, was the second year only of the gold fields, and the colonists were buoyant with hope, for their golden horizon seemed as yet to be boundless, and they had not entered upon an expenditure comparable to the inpouring wealth. And yet ere long they found all these means absorbed by other local wants; and as capital from without had not been secured, the railways continued unmade.

The projects of this kind that were launched to the colonial public were as follows:—The Melbourne and

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Hobson's Bay Railway, which came to a successful completion; although at great cost in the times in which it was constructed. It now pays a dividend of eight per cent., which is expected to be enlarged after the opening of the recently constructed branch to St. Kilda. The Melbourne and Williamstown Railway, which afterwards coalesced with the leading project of the day: this was the Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway; which, after a languid effort of its directory, limited to the Williamstown branch line, has been transferred by purchase to the colonial government. The Geelong and Melbourne Railway, which has been successful, and will be completed during the present year, 1857. The Geelong and Ballarat Railway, which, after a precarious flutter above the horizon, drooped reluctantly below it, and has not ventured to reappear since the government intimated its views on railway policy, and the intention of constructing and owning the main lines of the country. It was difficult for Geelong to dispute the main qualities of her Ballarat line; but she had already discovered that her first railway should have been in that direction, and not to Melbourne, and she would willingly therefore have resumed the charge of her own interests rather than leave them to the routine rule of the government step, and to the dubious counsels that might emanate from the rival atmosphere of Melbourne. The direct Melbourne and Ballarat line, the great antagonist of the other, has already an ominous consideration with the general government.

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The later policy of the colonial government with regard to the chief railway lines, results from what appeared to be the inadequacy of private effort to accomplish these pressing requisites. The history of the most important line—that which not only conducts to the great gold fields of Mount Alexander and Bendigo, but which it was contemplated should eventually go on to Sydney, eminently illustrates the truth of the saying that what can be done to-day should never be deferred till to-morrow. The government was in the disposition to encourage such great undertakings on the part of public companies. The land required for the proposed line was freely promised, so far as still unalienated by sale, and a guarantee of annual interest upon outlay. The company asked six per cent. of guaranteed dividend, so as to be assured against all contingencies; the government offered four, and eventually agreed to five. This rate was sufficient for the home market, according to the fickle barometer of the time; and the colonists might now have been steaming upon this great trunk line, had they been ready to place their stock, or the surplus of it beyond the small appropriations of the residents, upon the London Exchange. But six months elapsed in mending some flaw in the Act of Council, and six months more in deciding on a course and empowering an agent. It was now too late; as the war had straitened the money market, and the limited colonial subscriptions, on which the calls were most reluctantly paid, hardly availed to maintain a show of life in constructing merely the Williamstown branch.

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"There is a tide," &c. with railways as well as men, and taken at the flood it leads, in practical phraseology, to their successful completion. Accordingly at this proper season—for the years 1852 and '53 were seasons of monetary buoyancy in London as well as Melbourne—a good scheme was hardly conceived in Melbourne ere its duplicate was found on the Home Exchange. In 1853 there was more than one London edition of the Melbourne and gold fields line, besides that which was projected in Victoria. The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Company had hardly completed their preliminaries, when they read in the home papers of an Anglo brother association having the same object as themselves, but on a more complete plan and with larger means to accomplish it. A brief further interval, and a first instalment of the railway plant reaches the colony from the home body, together with a fair offer of amalgamation; and as the froth of the first excitement has now long since gone past, perhaps both the local company and the Melbourne citizens have had time to regret that an arrangement was not made. The English company was wound up, and its subscription money returned, leaving the port still in want of the docks and other improvements which the company contemplated, and which Melbourne may yet want for years to come ere she can luxuriate in another opportunity of refusing them.

The present position of affairs in regard to railways in Victoria is somewhat to this effect. The Government have decided to construct and own the main lines, which, when finished, may be leased to companies.

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The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay line, and that from Geelong to Melbourne, which is now nearly complete, are private enterprises, and will not be interfered with. These two were projected before the Government took the present view of owning the main lines. If this view be maintained by the succeeding administrations of the now self-governing colony, the construction of the main lines is finally removed from private enterprise. But minor lines may still be sanctioned; and the merits of several are now being discussed by the colonial public: such as a suburban line, connecting east Melbourne with Richmond, Bahran, St. Kilda, and Brighton; and a line to connect Melbourne and Geelong with the promising watering-place of Queenscliff, on the western headland of the entrance of Port Phillip.

The Government plans were published in full detail in December last year, and submitted to the Legislature in the following month. The interior had been extensively surveyed, with the view of ascertaining the best directions. One chief difficulty is the dividing range, which cannot be escaped, and which, at the summit level, is 1911 feet above the sea. Two main lines are proposed for the present, one from Melbourne to Castlemaine and Sandhurst, the other from Geelong to Ballarat. These comprise, together, 185 miles of railway, of which 110 miles were to consist of a single line of rails, and 75 miles of a double line. The works were to be made, throughout, suitable for a double line when wanted at a future time.

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The cost was estimated at six millions sterling, and the expenditure was projected over three years, thus:—

For 1857 . .	. £1,500,000
1858 . .	. 2,000,000
1859 . .	. 2,500,000

For the ways and means, the proposal was the issue, as required, of debentures secured on the colonial revenues, bearing five per cent. interest.

The surveyor-general contended rather for the costly, but complete, system of English railways, than the cheap plans of America, which he considered to be ever, in the end, the most expensive. He sought an intermediate range of construction, as best suited to the colony. His views and estimates on these important subjects are the following: —

"Owing to want of interior water-carriage, the chief carriage will probably be in heavy goods rather than in passengers. The carriage of goods to the gold fields, during 1853 and 1854, was from two to three millions sterling per annum. The rates are now much lower, but the yearly amount for goods and passengers may still be assumed at 2,000,000*l.* Of this amount, one-third to one-half may fall to the proposed railways. Adding to this amount one quarter million for increase during the interval of construction of the line, there is about one million yearly of gross receipts. From this amount a liberal allowance for working costs would be fifty per cent., or 500,000*l.*, leaving the same sum available

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for interest or capital, and for ultimate redemption of the principal.

I may remark, of this estimate, that it seems to take for granted that the rates of carriage are to be the same by railway as the present charges by the cumbrous and expensive system that the rails will supersede. While, however, the rates of carriage are likely to be much lower, the ratio of increased traffic must greatly exceed what is above calculated on. The chief source of error with railways, and colonial railways in particular, has arisen from a short estimate for cost of line and of working charges. In the present instance, if these are to be relied on, this railway system has a favourable prospect of success. The policy of a Government proprietorship of these principal lines, and of a system of solid railway construction for a young colony, are points on which there are great differences of opinion, and upon which it can scarcely be said a public opinion has yet been proclaimed in Victoria. On this important question the colony, with its newly assembled parliament and its system of free government, will ere long pronounce its views.

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CHAP. V.

COMMERCE.

Comparative Import to Export Power.—Export Articles.—Tin Ore (Black sand).—Tallow.—Hides.—Live Stock.—Wool.—Gold.—Imports.—Their Irregularities now adjusted.

WHEN we reflect on the liberal tendencies of the age, which, in regard to commerce, take the course of extending the external operations of the different countries of the world, we are struck, no doubt, by the changes which this system has hitherto effected; but yet far more by what it has still to accomplish. The mutual intercourse of nations, to the advantages of which most are now so ready to subscribe, will go on prosperously enough if the respective rulers will but refrain from impediments. The late Russian war has far more effectually restrained the progress of Victoria than any possibilities of the wildest natural convulsions.

The import and export lists form the index of this beneficial commerce. The first illustrates the addition to each country from other resources and other climates than its own; for by this system we enjoy the products of other climes without the possible blight of the climate itself; the second exhibits our means of paying for these

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benefits, and of annually maintaining the supply. We naturally marvel how Old England fared with scarcely an export item upon her commercial page, and of course with a corresponding blank in the import; and as this is not very long ago, we may by and by wonder equally how she got along with so little as her present proportion, whose amount is so surprising to us in the comparison of the past. Our surprise to see the exports of our United Kingdom for each of the years 1853-5 average nearly 100,000,000*l.* sterling is scarcely subsided, when we find the value for 1856 to approach 116,000,000*l.* This is a grand purchasing power in the wide market of the world, and conveys to the 28,000,000 of the population a valuable and varied addition to the purposes of business and the amenities of life. It is in this view that Victoria has many and great advantages, which she may fairly set off against the discomforts of a new and changing scene. Ages of toil have brought our parent country to her present commercial position; but Victoria enters almost at once upon her elevated platform. The first can at length avail of 4*l.* per head of export produce; the last commences the race with 46*l.* per head.

There is nothing more interesting to observe in a new country than the casting about, as it were, of the population for those means and resources that are permanently to support and enrich the place. This is always going on amongst a vigorous people. To such will the new ground on which they stand appear like a mine in which they are engaged, which they believe to be rich,

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but without precisely knowing in what. The great business is to ascertain what useful elements it contains, and how many of these will remunerate for their working. Victoria has passed through processes of this kind, some of which have proved to be soundings that brought nothing up, while others have established successively one resource after another; probably to the ruin of the first adventurers, as very commonly happens.

In the pre-gold era, the wool produce was of course the honoured head of the export list, and was followed by other items that were derived from live stock and squatting; such as tallow, hides, and bones, which formed collectively an appreciable addition to the Australian staple of that time.

It was hoped at one time that to these might have been added a large export of cured meat. Thirteen or fourteen years ago the sheep and cattle were increasing so fast over the wants of the population, that beef and mutton were sold by the carcass at less than one penny per pound. At the boiling establishments for tallow making, which arose out of this state of the market, and where entire flocks of sheep were slaughtered and melted down in constant succession, the hind legs, which contained comparatively little fat, and were not melted, were sold by retail at 4*d.* or 5*d.* each, and would on occasions find their way into the river or the dung heap when the overstocked market refused to receive more. At this conjuncture the curing business was spiritedly taken up. The shelves of provision stores groaned beneath piles of the despised mutton legs smoked into

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hams, while the finest beef the world could produce was salted and packed into thousands of tierces and shipped off to England and elsewhere.

But this business did not answer. Much of the beef became spoiled on the voyage homewards, from causes never clearly made out. The gold discoveries gave to the trade, which had yet kept a limited ground, its final upset. The colonial market has since been so fully and regularly supplied from cheaper sources of manufacture in Europe and America as to have effectually prevented any conspicuous resumption of the business. In 1851 the export was nearly 1400 tons, but in the following year it had fallen to 400 tons.

The country, however, was scoured, or, as the term afterwards became, was "prospected," for other resources. The bark of the very abundant acacia tree was noticed as suitable for tanning purposes, and some shipments made by persons who understood the subject gave such promise as to create immediately a trade in the article. Far and near were these graceful members of the forest stripped of their vital coating, and left to perish at the merciless instance of commerce. But neither does this business seem to have remunerated, as it has been for nearly ten years discontinued, while the rapid growth of the young forest has already restored the havoc of the past.

And so with the huge stems of the red gum, whose hard solid timber, of dull blood-red hue, was expected to prove useful in the home market. Promptly were thousands of the forest monarchs laid prostrate, and the

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wharves were strewn with the unwieldy produce. But neither did this answer. The price realised failed to cover expenses or yield a profit.

The climate being suitable to the vine, attention had been directed to wine-making. But the larger population since the gold discoveries has rendered the supply of grapes so short for the table, that nothing will be spared for other purposes for some years. The example of New South Wales, which already exports a peculiar wine of local manufacture, should, however, prevent discouragement on mere theoretical grounds. The example of California, also, may give us another instance with regard to the growth and manufacture of bread-stuffs, and a considerable export; all of which have been attained since the discovery of the gold there.

The advent of the gold in Victoria has effected a change with regard to the future. The increased cost of production will operate against some vocations that the features of the colony might have otherwise called into being, or maintained in full and increasing efficiency.

At the same time, but in other directions, the circumstances of the colony will stimulate production and develop fresh resources. Its capital town is the focus of a large commerce, which collects together, for the use of the colonists, the choicest appliances that the industry and genius of other lands have created; while the railway communication, which the increasing trade and population will soon everywhere establish, must cheaply and promptly convey to seaports and markets the produce of the far interior.

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It is natural and excusable enough that, since the discovery of the gold, the public attention should be mostly taken up with wealth and resources of a mineral character. Enthusiasm cannot now easily be aroused upon any other topic. But a strong and general faith in the mineral wealth of the colony is a wonderful stimulant and means of discovery, for it surmounts the discouragements of preliminary failure that so often baulk many promising enterprises. Our best gold fields have been established by this undying faith, which will eventually reach the gold if it be in a situation accessible to man's industry. To this, in fact, must we attribute those deep sinkings which now form the marked feature of our auriferous system, and that perseverance with the auriferous quartz rock which, after many preliminary losses, is at length likely to invest that valuable and most abundant article with the chief importance in the colonial commerce.

Two other minerals have been already discovered in large quantity in Victoria, namely, the rich tin ore of the black sand of the Ovens district, and the antimony ore near Heathcote. The sand, which appears to exist in very large quantity, contains, besides some mechanical admixture of gold, about 70 per cent. of tin: some samples have yielded as much as 85 per cent. The latest accounts from the interior describe the trade in this article as assuming a settled form. The value of the sand seems now well ascertained, and the price upon the spot has been steadily advancing until it has

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reached 40*l.* per ton. It is now commonly brought down to the seaports in small stout bags. The long distance, however, to its interior location of nearly 200 miles from Melbourne, forms a serious drawback, in the present state of the roads and in the absence of railway carriage. The transit viâ the River Murray and South Australia, which is for the present the natural direction of this trade, is shut up by the Victoria government somewhat vexatiously, from considerations connected with the export duty on gold.

The antimony ore appears to be unlimited in quantity; but the value in the home market, of from 9*l.* to 10*l.* per ton, will not admit of its being touched as yet by the eager fingers of commerce: nor probably for some years to come. This resource, like many others, remains for the railway era.

EXPORTS.

I shall understand here by the word commerce the export and import trade of the colony, and, as I am now engaged with the exports, shall allude to the present position of this branch of colonial business. Large as the total value of this annual produce appears, it comprises a very few items: indeed nothing of moment beyond two distinguishing articles—gold and wool. I must therefore briefly dismiss the minor list. It still marks the pastoral feature of the country, as consisting for the most part either of the sheep and

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cattle of the interior pastures, or of their products, in the form of beef, tallow, hides, bones, and horns. Beyond the pastoral department in this secondary list, we have small gatherings of gum and bark, besides the promising tin ore already mentioned; of which during the first nine months of last year, 1856, the shipments from the port of Melbourne amounted to 314 tons, valued at nearly 17,000*l.*

Of cured beef, which has nearly disappeared from the official export list, I have already spoken. The tallow trade, so far as regards the export business, is now nearly as much restricted as the cured meat. The advanced prices of live stock, caused by the additions to the population since the gold discoveries, have quite arrested the boiling-down process; which could be carried on only so long as the tallow of the sheep or bullock was more valuable than the carcass. This is no longer the case, and even the supply thus restricted is nearly all absorbed by local demand. In 1850, the quantity exported had risen to 4500 tons. There was a slight decrease in the following year, whose last quarter witnessed the triumphs and difficulties of the gold fields. The subsequent operations decreased rapidly. In 1855, the export was down to 600 tons, and the two following years are likely to mark a still decreasing account.

There is an extending trade in the export of ox-hides. Of late, the advanced prices in Europe, co-operating with cheaper transit within the last year or two to

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and from the interior, have given a stimulus to this branch. Every raw hide has now a value, even in the far interior, which causes it to be taken care of; and it is salted on the spot: instead of being merely dried in the sun, as formerly, and, at the risk of damage in that imperfect state, sent down for shipment. These colonial hides now rank high in the home market, being equal to, or even beyond, those of Buenos Ayres. They are worth, at present, from 15*s.* to 18*s.* each in the colony, and the value of the annual export is about 30,000*l.*

Several hundred tons of bones and horns have been annually exported; but the local demand for the former to be used as a manure is likely soon to displace it from the export list. Some bone-crushing machinery was about to be erected under this expectation.

Prior to the gold discoveries, the export of live stock promised to be a business of large proportions. So rapidly did the sheep multiply over the pastures of the Port Phillip settlement, that only three years after the first flocks had been imported from over-stocked Tasmania, the tide had been reversed, and fat sheep were being despatched from Victoria to the markets of the sister colony. It was in this kind of live stock, namely, such as were fat and ready for consumption, that Victoria excelled; and it would happen that her fat sheep would be shipped to Sydney at the same moment that the lean or "store" flocks of New South Wales were crossing the boundary to find a higher market in Victoria.

The export of sheep and cattle has been confined

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almost solely to the adjacent colonies, including occasional ventures to New Zealand. Only South Australia has occasionally tried the Mauritius market. At present, the trade in fat stock is almost confined to Tasmania. The increasing requirements of Victoria now bring in a constant overland stream of the flocks, herds, and horses, of New South Wales. The export of sheep from Victoria reached the number of 70,000 in 1851, after which it declined to less than one half, while the prices ran high during the gold excitement; but since these have passed away with the years 1853 and 1854, the trade has rather rallied, and is likely to increase. The annual export of cattle has been from 5000 to 6000 head until within the last two or three years, when it has much increased; the number in 1855 having exceeded 20,000. A large trade in fat cattle is carried on from Gipps Land to Hobart Town.

WOOL.

I return to some consideration of the earliest of the products of Australian colonisation. The general prediction, that the effects of the gold would be to diminish the wool export, has not yet been realised in this the sixth year of our experience. On the whole, there has been an increase, although not in the regular and rapid ratio of the pre-gold times. The quantities yearly exported for five years before and five years after the gold discoveries appear as follow: —

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YEARLY EXPORT OF WOOL FROM VICTORIA BEFORE AND AFTER THE GOLD DISCOVERY.

Years.	Wool, in lbs.	Years.	Wool, in lbs.
1846	6,406,950	1851	16,345,000
1847	10.210,030	1852	20,247,000
1848	10,554,663	1853	20,843,000
1849	14,567,005	1854	22,998,000
1850	18,091,000	1855	22,353,000

The quantities of the later series of years have been assisted by considerable importations of sheep from New South Wales, and the weight of the fleece is perhaps enhanced by a more than usual share of the clip of these years being shorn and shipped in the grease, owing to the difficulties in some places of procuring sufficient workmen. The marked diminution of 1851 probably arises from the dryness of the season of 1850-51; a season that gave the celebrated Black Thursday (6th February, 1851) to colonial experiences, and from drought and diminished grass affected both the quantity and quality of the wool. The dryness of the season 1854-55 gives another halt, but one of a much smaller decrease in the annual exposition of the figures. I have not the returns for the year 1856; but owing to the genial season, they may be expected to show an increase. The diminution of the well-known sheep disease, called the scab, is also favourable to future increase. This disease, which caused great havoc during the years 1854 and 1855, is now all but extirpated throughout the colony.

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With reference to the drain of sheep from New South Wales into Victoria, which, with the greater increase of population and consumption in the latter colony, will probably go on in augmenting proportions, it is of consequence to observe that the wool of the former colony still fully maintains its ratio of increase. The average annual export of the four years 1853 to 1856 was upwards of eighteen millions of pounds weight; and the quantity for the last of these years, 19,200,000 lbs. We are therefore, I think, safe in assuming that for at least some years of the future the joint production of the two colonies will be marked by a regular yearly increase. South Australia holds out a similar promise, and in a smaller ratio also, Tasmania. Long before any symptoms of failure in the Australian supply, if such are ever to appear, another well-stocked pastoral field will have arisen in the same neighbourhood; namely, the colonies of New Zealand, whose Middle Island in particular will soon vie with its Australian sisters in the production of this great staple of British commerce.

The first effects of the gold discoveries paralysed the operations of the remoter squatting settlements. The supply of labouring hands being precarious, and the cost of carriage enormous, the march of the squatter into the far interior was arrested, and many outer locations abandoned. The sheep of Victoria, crossing the boundary of the Murray, had joined with those from New South Wales in ascending the Lower Darling and occupying its banks and their vicinities for more

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than two hundred miles. But the first check arising from the gold has been compensated in another way; for, the prices of stock being advanced, the rates of transit are now being lowered, servants are more steady and reasonable, and the wool has maintained unexampled prices in the European market.

The official returns for Victoria and New South Wales show that the numbers of sheep in the latter colony are considerably greater than those in the former, while at the same time the case is reversed with reference to the quantity of wool exported, as the following table will show.

Number of sheep and export of wool from Victoria and New South Wales respectively, for the year 1855:—

	Sheep, number.	Wool, lbs.
Victoria - - - - -	5,332,000	22,353,000
New South Wales - - -	8,144,000	17,671,000

The apparent anomaly is traceable to two causes; the lighter fleece of the older colony, and the fact that Port Phillip is of more convenient access to the south-western district of New South Wales than Sydney, and therefore receives the pastoral produce of this locality. But the considerable trade of these parts and of the adjacent portion of Victoria is now vigorously contested by a third party, the colonists of South Australia, who have already navigated the river Murray as far as Albury, and conveyed the wool by steamers and barges to the ports of their own colony.

The procedure with respect to the wool may be thus

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described. Sheep-shearing commences with the advent of warm weather, being usually spread over the months of September, October, and November, according to the exposure or elevation of the country. The earlier opportunies are best, as the fleece is free from the burrs and grass seed that are freely given off in summer. Remote locations are often deprived of shearers until long after the proper season, and the wool is in consequence deteriorated. The shearers traverse the country in small parties, being usually pre-engaged by various squatters for particular districts in a certain rotation. The rate of pay before the gold discoveries was from 12*s.* to 14*s.* per hundred fleeces, besides rations and accommodation. It has since been 20*s.* to 25*s.* A smart accustomed hand will cut a hundred fleeces in a day, although this surpasses the usual measure of diligence.

The sheep are first washed with more or less skill, sometimes by pouring water from a spout, at others by one or more immersions and swimmings; they are then kept together for a day or two on clean ground, that the wool may dry, and the "yoke" or natural grease come again upon the fibre, but this time in a clean state. The fleece is then cut, and if the sheep is diseased, this opportunity is taken to dip it in some mercurial or other solution; a treatment that often occasions death during the succeeding night, if the weather be cold or wet.

Next in order, is the dispatch of the wool to market. It is put up in those well-known "wool-packs," that the looms and fingers of Bonnie Dundee have long been supplying to her Arcadian rival of the antipodes, and

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whose yearly increasing orders have familiarised the senior belle with the marvels of Australian progress. Each pack has usually about one hundred fleeces, and if the wool be well washed, should weigh 250 to 300 lbs., the pack by itself weighing 9½ to 10 lbs. A huge dray on two strong wheels, drawn by three, four, and even seven pairs of oxen, or working bullocks as they are colonially distinguished, is now started on the long bush track, that leads through scrub and forest, over creeks and gullies, plain, hill, and hollow, to the settlers' market. The bullock-driver has a twofold warfare on his long journey; a physical one with his animals, and a moral struggle as he hails each public house. He is far from successful throughout this long and trying march; and his anxious employer may learn, several months after the start, that an unusual delay on reaching town had been caused by an upset of the dray and its contents into the Deep Creek or the Devil's Gully, where the faithful servant had nearly perished in his master's cause but for the kind and long-continued attentions of the neighbouring publican. The wool may thus be wetted inside the bale, although the outside may have lost the trace; and if shipped in this state, it may heat so as to take fire, and endanger the vessel's safety: as has repeatedly occurred.

But I speak now of the past rather than the present. A few years ago the only interior traffic of any consequence was that to and from the pastoral stations. During the summer months, from the beginning of October to the end of February, the pastoral solitudes

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were alive with the annual wool-trade; and the traveller rarely lost view of a line of drays with their expansive loads emerging upon the horizon of the Australian plain, and threading the long and slow journey to the seaports. The variety to this down journey was the countermarch homewards, when the flour, tea, sugar, the jingling pannikins, and the carefully-guarded bonne bouche of wine or spirits for the master, were marched forth from the town into the bush. The countenance of the squatter and his merchant took their complexion from the home wool-market; the bullock-driver for his part was happy in the voidance alike of his money and his cares, which had both been left behind him at the town or wayside public house, in exchange for a marvellously long score of indulgence, the last and heaviest portion of which was usually supposed to have been incurred while he was fast asleep over the effects of the first.

The gold fields brought a change. Now, when a ceaseless traffic pervades the interior country, the wool drays are merged with others in a common throng; or the bales of the snowy fleeces, which formerly held the isolated existence of a privileged class, are mixed with the vulgar world of other merchandise. But this change has introduced a better and cheaper system of transit; regular carriers or carrying co-partneries now traverse the interior, and accommodate alike the pastoral stations, the gold fields, and the interior towns which these auriferous localities are gathering near them. The wool is now mostly brought down by responsible carriers, at rates varying from 5*l.* to 20*l.*

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per ton, from distances up to 300 miles; which is, on the whole, a better system than for each settler to maintain his travelling establishment — his drays, bullocks, and furnishings, and his vagarious bullock-driver.

The practice of repacking the wool after it reached town was early established. Each lot was thrown out for the inspection of purchasers, and reassorted into certain classes and qualities, as, combing or clothing, of qualities 1st, 2nd, 3rd, &c., pieces or broken fleeces, locks heavy or badly washed, and greasy or unwashed. The last was often bought for the purpose of being scoured before shipment, and in this condition it brought a high price. After being thus sorted, the wool was usually sold by auction.

The repacking gave the wool some additional compression, but not such as to satisfy the shipping agent. By him the bale was now "dumped" in a hydraulic press, and the elasticity restrained by hemp lashings, or small-sized hoop-iron. The dimensions were thus reduced to one-third, or even one-fourth of the portly form that first emanated from the country station. Only in this way could a full-weight cargo of this light material be secured; but the fleeces, unless very clean, were liable to be deteriorated by their long compression. A system more favourable to the wool has since prevailed; for since the increase of commerce has crowded the harbours with shipping, the wool finds more accommodation, and at a less price of transit. The spacious holds of many competing vessels now

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take the wool without dumping; and whereas in pre-gold times the rate of freight was from 1*d.* to 1½*d.* per pound, it now seldom exceeds one halfpenny.

The Australian wool has brought a new era in the woollen trade of our country. Its soft and "kindly" qualities, if I may be allowed phrases of trade not readily transcribable, adapt it for admixture with coarser and cheaper wools, so as to produce a woollen fabric elegant and comfortable, and at a price previously impossible. It is just forty years since the present system of the public sales of wool commenced in London. The wool trade of Britain was then of small account, so far as it concerned the importation of the fine wools of other countries; and for years after it had risen to consideration, Australia had no place, or was ranked only in the etceteras of nominal contributors. The increase of British wool importation is one of the pleasant marvels of modern commerce. The comparative handful imported in the year 1817 has become the ninety millions of 1857; and the Australian contribution, which was long a blank upon the earlier pages, now considerably outweighs the collective quantity of the rest of the world.

GOLD.

The gold produce comprises six-sevenths of the entire export value of Victoria. As the prospecting of the country proceeds, under the stimulus of the last six years' discoveries, the gold is ever found more and more

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generally distributed. Almost in every direction where the frequently recurring quartz rock or quartz gravel is found, or in beds beneath where the gravel may be supposed to have once been, the auriferous indications are present. But only in beds where these indications are abundant can the gold be profitably extracted by the present rude and inefficient modes of the miners. These areas form the present gold-fields, where about one-third of the colonial population are now resident.

The gold is found either in a merely mechanical admixture with the gravel or any soft subjacent strata into which the heavy particles may have penetrated, or it is found in the quartz rock. In the latter it occurs in two forms; one in which it is scattered through the mass of the rock, the other in which it appears in veins or masses following fissures or lines of fracture. Nuggets or large masses are found in this latter system, and also isolated in all situations in the gravel, and throughout the drifts of what may be called the "gold measures." The spirit of mining adventure that urged on and developed the system of deep-sinking, has shown the auriferous system under a new aspect. When at a depth of 200 feet a "lead" is struck, the practised miner searches for the "gutter," and if he is fortunate in finding it, his hands may come back to him filled with solid gold. But the uncertainty of the "lead" and the expense of sinking qualify these riches materially. There is a history of the past, in the misty theories of gold production, to be some day unravelled from these leads and gutters.

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The gold of Victoria is remarkably pure, its fineness varying between 23 and 23½ carats: that is to say, with only from $\frac{1}{24}$th to $\frac{1}{48}$th part of natural alloy or impurity. The gold of New South Wales is usually less pure by about four per cent., and that of California is still less valuable. The purest of the Victoria gold is that of Ballarat, a field which is both the oldest and the most productive of the Victorian system. Confidence in the high purity of the Victorian produce has led to the practice of purchasing the gold without any assay, upon the spot where it is produced. The banks are now the principal buyers, and have their agencies at every important gold-field.

The Colonial Government have taken charge of the transport of the gold between the mines and the seaports, by means of an armed escort. Only once this body was attacked and the escort robbed by the bush-ranging desperadoes who prowled so numerously about the gold-fields four or five years ago. During the plentiful harvest of gold in the last half of 1852, two private escort companies adventured into existence; but their operations were soon found unprofitable. The government charge was at first equal to one per cent. from the nearer, and two per cent. from the remoter fields; but on the occasion of imposing an export duty of 2*s.* 6*d.* per ounce, in May 1855, the escort was made free, in those cases where the duty was arranged for before the gold left the official custody.

The first direction of the gold trade sent this produce into Melbourne and Geelong, where it was sold to the

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merchants, who procured advances from their bankers by drawing on London against the shipment of the precious metal. The demands for these advances were so heavy compared to the previous scale of banking business, that the exchange on London went to ten and even twelve discount; 100*l.* drawn at thirty days sight on London, would not sell for more than 88*l.* or 90*l.*, and for a time at first even this accommodation could be had only with limitation. The price of the gold was therefore kept down to 60*s.* per ounce: that is to say, 3*l.* in sovereigns would buy about 4*l.* in uncoined gold.

This state of things caused a strong demand for a local mint; while the tricks that began to be played with the gold called as loudly for a local assay office. The latter was established in Melbourne; but in consequence of the banks entering the market and becoming themselves buyers through confidential agents at the mines, the assay apparatus established at Melbourne was never called into use, and the building has now been turned to other purposes. For the mint there was a rival race in New South Wales, which colony had not at that time been so distanced as it has been since by Victoria. The request from Sydney was backed by a simultaneous remittance of 10,000*l.*; which proved, as might have been expected, a successful mode of urging the question. And thus it results that Sydney has possession of the mint while Melbourne has the gold, and still prefers, as before, to take her coin from London. But the extreme exchange alluded to, which caused

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the urgency of demand for a mint, has long since righted itself, and the subject has of late been quietly discussed with a good deal of diversity of opinion.

The monopoly practically held by the banks is attacked by the local merchants, and of course by the local gold-brokers, on the ground that it is merchandise, and not money or bullion, in which the banks are thus dealing. The banks' shareholders on the one hand, and the banks' customers on the other, may be left to adjust this question. The monopoly arises from the higher price that the banks find themselves in a position to give to the miners; and their business of buying gold has enabled them to extend banking accommodation to quarters which must have been otherwise deprived of its aid. I would observe, however, that the system of buying indiscriminately at the mines prevents the gold trade from being placed upon a sound basis. Frauds at the gold-fields have not as yet been so frequent as they promised to be in town, but they have been successfully effected, and we may suppose they will go on increasing. It is true the banks can disregard these occasional losses, and by the extent of their purchases ensure a safe average, and still keep out all competitors. We therefore want the assay office; but to give due effect to that agency, which has been heretofore inoperative, it should be accompanied by a local mint.

The gold is packed in small stout boxes, strengthened with iron hoops, and containing not more than what a man may readily carry. It was at first the custom to

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export the metal precisely in the state in which it was found, after it had been washed and cleansed of foreign intermixtures. But now it is usually run into large bars; an obvious improvement, by which certain differences on the wrong side in re-weight, which must be expected when ten thousand minute pieces pass necessarily through many hands, will not so readily occur.

The honour of carrying to the home market the Australian gold is eagerly competed for by the various shipping interests. For a ship to be at sea with a few tons of the precious metal gives to her voyage a national importance, and her safe arrival places consols on the edge of a rise. The largest quantity brought by any one ship was about 190,000 ounces, or nearly eight tons; according to the disputed mode of reckoning that hitherto rare prodigy, a ton of gold. Quantities of 150,000 to 180,000 ounces have been comparatively common; but the competing numbers of fine ships and steamers now greatly divide these prize freights. The rate charged by the sailing vessels to Liverpool and London stood long at 4½*d.* per ounce, but it has for some time been 3*d.* per ounce. A small advance may be got from steamers, owing to the saving in time with the large value concerned. With this saving in view, the newly-established overland monthly mail, *viâ* Suez, is likely to divert a large share of this gold carriage. The company, however, has not succeeded under its first charge of 1*s.* per ounce; and it remains to be seen whether the recent reduction to 10*d.* will accomplish the object.

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During the first eighteen months of gold exporting in the colony, large quantities of the precious metal left the seaports without any record. Successful diggers from adjacent colonies carried back their earnings in their pockets to their own markets, that they might sell the gold there for a higher price than prevailed at Melbourne, and large quantities were shipped without entry at the customs. The official record for this irregular period was therefore much below the actual truth. The produce for the year 1852, the second year of gold digging, was so large, according to estimates that allowed for the proportion not recorded, that it is doubtful if it has been equalled in any subsequent year. This estimate is authenticated by the large re-exportation from the adjacent colonies as compared with the quantity of gold sent there according to official record. In the case of Tasmania, for example, while 180,000 ounces were recorded as having been exported from the ports of that colony, only 2000 ounces appear on the Victoria official records as having been sent thither; though, as was well known, the larger quantity was the sole produce of Victoria.

The present gold-fields, which have survived the "rushes" of the impulsive mining interest, and may now be considered as firmly established seats of industry and wealth, are Ballarat, the vicinities of Castlemaine, near Mount Alexander, Bendigo, and the district of the Ovens. Several others have occasionally loomed forth prominently upon the horizon, but they have not retained their repute, and have been deserted more or

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less by the ten thousands who had temporarily flocked to them. Such were Creswick's Creek and Fiery Creek, which once boasted, the one of 25,000, the other of 40,000 people. Other places of more recent account, as Mount Blackwood and the neighbourhood of the town of Maryborough, give promise of permanent importance. Tarrengower and many other localities indicate inexhaustible resources from the auriferous quartz.

The quantities of gold brought down from the mines by the armed escorts, appear as under:—

	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Ounces	104,153	2,086,719	2,189,613	1,831,434	2,194,941	2,644,337

The results of the last year (1856) are spread over the different gold-fields in the following proportions, showing the present position of each as to relative importance:—

	Ounces.
Castlemaine, &c.	322,897
Bendigo	599,100
Maryborough	327,709
Ballarat	1,009,922
Beechworth (Ovens)	374,709
Total	2,634,337

These names, which are those of the principal fields, comprise also some adjacent dependencies. The Ballarat gold-field, which stands so prominently in this list,

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has for some time yielded the largest produce of all. It is estimated to have given to the commerce of the world, according to the escort returns from the 21st of September, 1851, no less than 2,802,000 ounces; which at the high value of upwards of 80*s.* per ounce obtained for the gold of this place, from its unusual purity, gives a production of nearly 12,000,000*l.* sterling. This was the earliest gold-field of any note, and acquired great celebrity during September and October 1851. The Mount Alexander gold-field then took the ascendant for a short interval, but only to transfer the restless mantle to the Bendigo district. Here the prolific wealth during the later half of 1852 assembled 50,000 persons upon the highly auriferous soil, and occasioned such a scarcity of food during the winter season and the wet state of the country, as to cause the rate of carriage to rise to 150*l.* per ton for a distance of 100 miles. For the last three years Ballarat has been gradually rising to its present preeminence; a preeminence it is likely to retain, in consequence of the extraordinary thickness of its rich auriferous drifts which the deep-sinking processes have exposed, and the additional resource of its quartz reefs.

Nearly all the gold produce is now exported from the port of Melbourne. A small proportion is still shipped at Geelong by the vessels that load a portion of the wool clip at that port; but this is gradually falling away under the centralising influences of the capital. The chief destination of the gold is London; only small proportions finding their way to India and elsewhere.

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Out of 3,003,806 ounces, exported during 1856, 2,702,113 are set down as for England; above 100,000 more sent to Sydney, if not coined at the mint there, would probably take the same homeward route, leaving less than 200,000 ounces for India, China, and other places. The quantity of gold exported from Victoria, according to the official returns of the Customs, appears as under:—

	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Ounces	145,146	1,974,975	2,497,723	2,144,699	2,751,405	3,003,806

IMPORTS.

The import trade of the colony did not long delay in rising to a par with the increased proportions of the exports. But situated at the antipodes of the chief sources of supply, the urgent demands that resulted from the sudden advent of wealth and population were at first very inadequately answered. They found for a time an imperfect response in draining the adjacent colonies. Next in order of distance, the Cape colony, Mauritius, and the circle of East Indian settlements, contributed all they could spare; and thus, in the second year of the gold, the import figures of Victorian commerce were raised from rather more than one million sterling of the previous year to upwards of four millions for 1852. The export value for that year, however, was nearly seven and a half millions sterling, according to

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official returns; while a more accurate estimate, which allowed for larger quantities of gold exported during that year without official record, nearly doubled the amount.

Such a disproportion produced an extraordinary scramble, and the prices of many articles of import took an unprecedented rise. Manilla was drained of cigars by the demands for the favourite cheroot, the only kind that was then used in the colony, and the price for this article took a start of 200 to 300 per cent. The same fate, so pleasant to the holders of such favoured goods, attended spirits, bottled beer, and some other merchandise. Cured fish of all kinds, sardines, cod, red and white herrings, were in such request for the diggings that money could scarcely procure them. But the "Glasgow magistrates," whose virtues were then without price, suffered a sad humiliation afterwards, through the over-enterprise of their citizens. Within two years of this elevating estimate of their worth, they might have been witnessed in cartloads upon the manure depôt near Melbourne; to which port the supplies sent during the interval were supposed to have been sufficient for the use of the whole southern hemisphere.

If the tide of trade exhibited at first somewhat of a hesitating march, as the home-shippers dubiously perused the accounts of the disturbing effects of the gold discoveries on colonial vocations and commerce, the subsequent force of the stream gave ample compensation. It was not until towards the middle of 1853 that the huge fleet that has ever since been necessary

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to Victoria's commerce began to arrive with its endless assortment of contents. At the end of that year, there had been an importation of the value of 15,843,000*l.*, and this was followed, in 1854, by a further supply of 17,743,000*l.* It may be remarked that these valuations are for the place of importation, and they are for the most part probably high as compared with the value at the place of shipment. But with all such allowance, there is still left a great accession to the commerce of the world, and in particular to that of our home-country; from which by far the larger proportion is derived, whether in the light of articles of home-production, or as sent to the colony through the channels of British commerce.

The scale of importation has since, as was to have been expected, considerably fallen off. But the trade having readjusted itself, the quantity is again in the ascendant, and will, in a year or two, surmount even that of the speculative action of 1853-4. The value of imports for 1856, of which I have not the completed returns, is computed at upwards of 14,000,000*l.*; of which amount the port of Melbourne represents 13,240,751*l.*

Under the altered circumstances of the colony after the discovery of gold, the import trade assumed some new features. Wealth suddenly acquired, and mostly by the operative classes who were often puzzled how to make use of it, gave rise to an extravagance of taste, of which we have many amusing stories. This is attested by the fact, that while articles of jewellery,

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watches, &c., were imported to the extent only of 1350*l.* in 1850, the yearly amount, three years afterwards, had increased to 154,000*l.* The urgency for house accommodation brought an immense and grotesque assortment of wooden and iron dwellings and warehouses, which are now extensively scattered about Melbourne, and considerably take away both from the appearance and the comfort of the place. Since the population have become more settled, and the novelty of mining life has passed off, this incongruous house-importation has all but ceased, as edifices of brick or stone can now be built at a price that ensures them a preference.

There was a prodigious increase in the importation of beer, wine, and spirits. In 1850 the value of these articles amounted to 83,000*l.*; in 1853 it had attained to 2,033,000*l.*; while the population in this short interval had increased only three to fourfold. A large business was promptly opened with the United States, of a highly beneficial character to the colony, comprising, as it did, ample supplies of breadstuffs, mining tools greatly more effective than those of English make, and an immense variety of cheap and useful furniture. To these has more lately been added that charming luxury, or rather necessity of the climate, ice. The Chinese have imparted a stimulus to rice importation, and have added to the import list one other article previously entirely new to it, but far less desirable in a social view than the grain just alluded to, namely, opium; of which the importation, already considerable, is rapidly increasing.

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The extravagant profits realised upon the earlier importations of merchandise after the gold discoveries brought a multitude of shippers into the market. Not only from Britain, but from countries and colonies both British and foreign, came hundreds of cargoes, which overstocked the colony alike with the suitable and the unsuitable. For a time the requirements of the market, in a population mostly huddled together within a couple of years, could not be thoroughly known even to themselves, much less to others at a distance. There was thus for a while a whimsical and unsettled aspect, and articles in request during one year might have passed into the tradesman's dead stock during the next. Grievous mistakes were made, chiefly in the random shipments of home speculators. No error was more common or prejudicial than that of supposing that the most inferior qualities of goods were suitable to this market—to a country teeming with gold, where operatives' wages at the time in question ranged between one and two pounds a-day.

All this mistake and uncertainty, and nearly all this random system of the past, has now ceased. As an American would say, the Australian trade is now thoroughly "posted;" and greatly to the advantage of his own countrymen, whose shipments of the unsuitable were usually the most fantastic of these superfluous doings. The great profits, and the still greater losses, of bygone times have alike disappeared. The latter have been extensive and severe, and the colonial agents have been proportionally rated by their suffering home

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constituency for the dainty perversity of the colonial market.

The import trade now rests upon a secure and well-understood footing. Over-supplies and the reverse in particular articles will, of course, still affect so remote a market; but the shipment of unsuitable wares is now a gratuitous piece of negligence and folly. The waves of change and fashion that vary the features of the market, are not more troublesome than those of other countries to their commercial and trading interests; unless it be the new demands that ever arise from the development of new features and the rapid progress of the country.

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CHAP. VI.

COLONIAL VOCATIONS.—VICTORIA AS A FIELD FOR EMIGRATION.

Contradictory Reports.—Unsuitable Immigrants.—Comparison of Wages with Cost of Living.—Equality of Classes.—Settlements on Land.—The Land Question.

THERE is no country of which more contradictory reports are received in Europe than Victoria. The same mail conveys to friends and kindred accounts the most promising and the most discouraging. Since the accession of wealth brought by the gold-fields this contradictory feature is particularly prominent. The truth is, that great resources do not save a country from alternations of prosperity and adversity. Among an enterprising people they rather sharpen the edge of these extremes; for, like the common saying that the richest people get the deepest in debt, so no amount of wealth or resources, but enterprise or extravagance, will surpass them and bring in for the time a debtor account.

If we bear this in mind we are not surprised that the gold-fields, which brought at first a profuse prosperity, witnessed subsequently a sharp reaction. Properties could not go on for ever rising in value, and their owners selling out, and spending successive per centages

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of profit by innumerable operations of this kind. By and by it was found that these busy people had overbuilt, overimproved, and in various other ways overspent themselves; and then came the reaction, when accounts must be adjusted and this mixed scene of industry and extravagance put upon a curtailed footing. Properties fall in value, profits and wages come down, and many, if they are not actually out of surplus and out of employment, yet do not find those facilities for moving along that so lately smoothed every pathway.

The numbers pressing upon one another's heels, as the emigrants stream into Victoria, renders some interval necessary even in the briskest times ere all can be accommodated suitably. These improving numbers still form a large proportion to the settled part of society that is to receive them, and for a time at first the adjusting process is not quite accurate everywhere. A, who would have suited B exactly, falls into the hands of C, where he suits but indifferently; while D, who would have just suited C, fell in with B instead; and so on. In truth the crisis, with most of our colonists, is in the first few days, or month, or year of the new scene; and in the strife first to find employment, and next to get it of the kind that suits you, here is often much preliminary suffering. In a new scene, far from home and friends, surrounded by the chill of an uncertain future, this suffering to some minds is insupportable. It is too often supplemented by the anxiety of a rather empty pocket in a country of costly living; while, to complete the misery of the first

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comers, the imperfect shelter of their tents or other makeshift accommodation on arrival, will occasion disease and death from even the best features of the climate.

I allude chiefly to the operative classes of emigrants. But if their scanty purses expose them to some sharp pangs at the outset, these are commonly of very brief duration. The phrase that Victoria is the working-man's paradise is true, notwithstanding certain qualifications which may be inferred from the preceding context. The fare in this paradise is not always equally choice; and, when the miscellaneous inhabitants have had some habit of what is very nice, they are very much out of sorts with what in the comparison is only middling. One instance may illustrate all. In 1853-4, when buildings could not be erected fast enough, the wages of masons and carpenters reached forty shillings a day; and, in some instances, even forty-five shillings. These wages are not more gratifying than the social position of the operative as a useful pillar of the community. But in 1855 there is a reaction in building; and, what between poor employers, bad times, and competing hands, there is not work excepting at one third of these previous rates. Some take the reduction, others shoal off to the great resource of the gold-fields, and the rest try other branches of labour that are less affected by the times, although perhaps not so familiar to their hand practice.

The advantage of a country of resources is that, although it experiences depressions, they do not and

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cannot last long. And so the sun rises once more upon our masons and carpenters; for in 1856 they are so far on their feet again, with advancing wages and social consideration, that we find them coalescing with other co-labourers for an eight hours' work system; in which there is a general success at the time, without abatement of the rates of wages previously current under the longer hours. So the bell now rings at four o'clock P.M.; and while envying merchants, lawyers, and shop clerks still labour on, our operative brother is hastening with his full day's wages to his family, his newspaper, and his evening's recreation.

It is not, then, from these classes that complaints of the colony are long sustained. But the population is not all of this suitable kind. While a skilled labourer or a trained domestic servant is scarcely to be had at the highest rates of wages, hundreds of less fortunate people are gladly responding to the poorest offers where the vocation may suit their limited adaptability. An advertisement appears requiring a respectable married couple to take some chance medley vocation, such as the charge of a suite of offices. Neither the educational requirements and strict references, and, even less, the nominal "salary," prevent a host of applications. On the other hand, a lady requires a housemaid; she advertises, and is punctually at the appointed place: generally, long before some solitary respondent presents herself, who, after considerable discussion, agrees to a temporary trial of her new mistress. The miscellaneous group comprising the first of these

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classes ever find the colony a very dull field. They never get launched into the continuous stream that is ever flowing before their eyes. They are always in the eddies, doing less and ill-off in the midst of industry and progress. To the second class the colony is a field of flowers, where, if there is any drawback, it results from the diminished appreciation in the people themselves of the plethora of their good fortune.

Amongst the unsuitable multitude that streams into the colony are many young men of good education, but untrained to any particular vocation,—that class who ever give the hopeless response that they are ready to turn to anything. How and where this legion gets stowed away throughout the colony is a marvel. It is somehow provided for, however; although not commonly in the way its members would prefer, or that is most accordant to such education and manners as their previous opportunities have permitted to them. A good book-keeper, an accurate accountant, a trained shopman, an experienced tradesman, are never long excluded from the main tide of colonial progress; but the difficulty is with the large remainder who have no special calling. Nevertheless these last are gradually scattered, both to fulfil some purpose of general utility, and to make room for the untiring tide of their successors.

If our eye could scan the fortunes of the last twelve months of such incongruous importations, the suggestive picture would be replete with a thousand varieties. There would be joy and sorrow, hope and struggle. The outset is the difficulty. Only some bright spots

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would then relieve a general shade; but with the ameliorative aids of time, the forward path would ever look brighter than that part of it which had been left behind. That couple of unhandy youths, who break stones by the highway side, have seen college life. Unhandy they are at everything but the wine-glass, in the use of which they acquired a lasting proficiency during the outward passage from home. But now, after a little practice, they manage to get along; for the colony is urgent for road-making, and such good rates of pay are given as can enable even them to find a living. Their work is by the piece, which spurs them on to double exertion. They can now earn one half of what that Irishman and his wife realise, who are rearing the adjacent pile of metal. A young licentiate was next to them for several months. He made enough for his own wants, but the difficulty of the wife and family roused him to higher aims. He is in improving circumstances at last; but as he never thought or spoke well of the colony, he now suffers the annoyance of the non-fulfilment of his desponding predictions.

Far in the interior, that slovenly fellow is a shepherd. Some tinkling bells tell you his sheep are near, although he himself is pretty much at his ease on the subject. His wife is hut-keeper, to act as cook for her husband and a rough Highlander, who has also the charge of a flock. The two parties accommodate themselves as they best can in the narrow quarters of the out-station; and each morning the Arcadian brothers sally forth, the one

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to the right, the other to the left, in charge of their respective flocks. One is not unlike what we might expect in such a vocation; the other is of good family, and has enjoyed his opportunities, only that the blood has not run pure — the chemist knows not why. He married the stewardess after a courtship on the outward passage; and when the hundred pounds of start-money, from a considerate parent, had gone to the winds, the couple, greatly cooled in their mutual fires, are eventually found rusticating where we now meet them. A comrade in the same ship was promptly provided for in a merchant's office; but was hardly well seated when he gave it up — to aim at higher usefulness, as he said. Burns' song, "We're no just fou," had suited him better than he suited the merchant. He is now keeping a publican's books, has the run of his table, with a few extras; and a hazy interval occasionally, although so much objected to where he was previously situated, is now quite in the spirit of the new business.

Here is an old man who can settle to nothing. He never has anything on hand but a large family. When his friends set him up on one side, he topples over on the other. The patience-tried relatives on the other side of the world sent him out to the colony, and his new circle there would as gladly reciprocate the compliment by sending him back again. How he lives from day to day is a mystery to every one, excepting the latest of his charitable victims. Perhaps he is not very particular; and when the tether of credit is exhausted in an eastern ward of the town, he reappears in

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the west with all the prestige of a blank escutcheon and a new face.

The colony is much too full of these unsuitables, whose complaints of the want of employment and success must therefore be read with qualifications. They are far, however, from comprising merely that dubious class who are described in the preceding lines, for indeed many excellent persons suffer a long struggle ere they can push their way. Some conception is formed of the number of these unsettled stars of the colonial firmament, on the occasions when openings occur in the service of the government. Every one supposes himself fit for this service. Our newly arrived colonist places, of course, great faith in his special letter to the Governor. His hint about an appointment is understood with a ready courtesy, and his name duly recorded, but with the ominous intimation that several hundred are already on the list before him. In the late official arrangements regarding immigration, six sub-agents were required to be sent from the colony to various British ports, and within a brief space after this requirement was made public, there were understood to be seven or eight hundred applications.

Tell me not of money's sum, but of money's worth, says the home reader, as he casts his eye down the long column of colonial remuneration as set forth in colonial newspapers and guide-books. The Victorian Bradshaw sets forth, in its monthly recitals, an enticing picture, from the report of the daily 10*s.*, 20*s.*, 30*s.* wages of the labour market, up to the 2000*l.* or 3000*l.* awarded

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to the high dignitaries of the state, headed by the Governor with his 10,000*l.* of salary and 5000*l.* of allowances. The next question of course is, how far does the money go?

The cost of living in Victoria varies very materially with those intervals of excitement and depression that I have alluded to. It varies also according to the changeable price of provisions, these prices depending to some extent upon the colonial harvest, which is occasionally short simultaneously in all the colonies, as happened after the dry winter and spring of 1854. In consequence of this shortcoming, and notwithstanding considerable importations, the price of fine flour was maintained at from 35*l.* to 55*l.* for about two years, until the plentiful harvests of the last two seasons have brought it below 20*l.* The unusually high price of wheat throughout the commercial world during these scarce years, assisted the long continuance of this high price, which could not otherwise have so continued in a port of such extensive and general commerce as the capital of Victoria. During this dear season the four-pound loaf ranged from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 3*d.* The colonial bakers do indeed entertain complimentary views alike of the paying powers of their customers and the remuneration due for their own labour; for the price of bread has not gone below 10*d.*, at a price for flour that in England would have brought a public outcry at any rate beyond 6*d.*

The colony is now freely supplied alike with the best and the worst of all the requisites and comforts of life. These are of course dearer than they are to be had in

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England, whence most of them have been transmitted; but the additional rate is not heavy, not more in general than from 20 to 25 per cent., or about one fourth added; for Melbourne is now filled with numerous and well-stocked shops competing as actively with one another for custom as at home. The principal difference in expense arises in those items of a household that are not imported, but, being supplied in the country itself, are subject to the heavier labour charges attending their production. Most conspicuous in this list is the house accommodation, whose cost is particularly subject to those causes already alluded to as so greatly affecting the rates of wages. The comfortable brick or stone cottage that 10*l.* or 15*l.* a year would procure for an industrious labourer, is here competed for by the clerk of 400*l.* a year at the cost of one fourth of his income. At present the colony has settled down into a condition that promises to be a permanent one, after the unsettled times of high prices in 1852-4, and of the reaction of low prices in 1855.

From 30*l.* to 50*l.* a year, then, may furnish to a working man and his family such accommodation as will probably satisfy him at the outset, till he sees the way to better things. Young men "without encumbrance," whether they be operatives of the mind or of the hand, have a great advantage in the costs of living over the family man, however much the latter may prevail in the item of social happiness. Board and lodging is now plentifully offered, by competing establishments, at rates varying from 1*l.* to 2*l.* per

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week. The luxury of your own sleeping apartment cannot be secured for the first sum; nor yet a very roomy space, even to Melbourne notions, for the second. The hotels give board and lodging at 3*l.* to 4*l.* per week. Among numerous eating-houses, many advertise their charge at 1*s.* per meal, a state of things very different from that of three or four years previously. Eggs and poultry, milk and fresh butter, green vegetables and green fruit, are all, as yet, articles whose high price ranks them amongst luxuries. Potatoes are likely to be reasonably supplied, both from inland growth and the large contributions of Tasmania and New Zealand. The large accessions to the population since the gold discoveries, have raised the prices of sheep and oxen, but beef and mutton are still plentifully supplied at prices about the same as those that prevail in England.

These high money rates, that now more or less characterise Victoria, are the result of the gold discoveries, prior to which event a very moderate scale of things prevailed. At that time, several articles of a household, and in particular butchers' meat, were cheaper in the colony than in the mother country. Others were dearer, comprising the various imported necessaries. In a comparison of colonial with home expenses, therefore, there was perhaps collectively no great difference. But as the colonial rate of wages stood then at about double of what they were at home, this afforded to the intending emigrant a clearly comprehended inducement to quit his country for so remote an abode. But

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although the calculation is now less simple between the acquisitions of labour on the one hand, and the cost of maintenance on the other, yet the amount of wealth given by the gold-fields has greatly improved the condition of the people. The rates of wages are four times the home rates, while the cost of living should scarcely be twofold.

The gold of Victoria purchases the produce of every market, and Melbourne is the great commercial emporium of the southern hemisphere. Since the disturbing waves of the first years of the gold, a settled society has arisen, which has greatly enhanced the attractions of the country as a permanent home. The recently conceded self-government extends the compass of this attraction. The enlivening noise of material progress, and the stimulus of personal success, are diversified by the graver interests, in their multiform bearing, pertaining to the public welfare. On the new scene of a colony there is not the political monopoly — the impenetrable adamantine front presented by an old society to the industrial masses of its people. The general independence of social position and means in the colony, is the first great equalising feature, and the effect of this is seconded by the necessity that ever exists for adaptations to novel circumstances and local wants. Hence originality of idea is more appreciated than a skilful diplomatic pilotage through old tracks. The practical genius, and, in the main, the disinterested views, of these well-conditioned masses, are at once a

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flood of light for practical purposes, and a swaying influence in public affairs. Ambition may rear its head from any social grade, unchecked by conventional barriers. Already, in Victoria, the tradesman and artisan have been preeminently conspicuous for originality, influence, and usefulness in public life.

The proverbial vocation of a colony is agriculture. In Victoria there are two others which open a rival field of attraction,—the squatting and the gold-mining. These two I shall reserve for subsequent chapters, and conclude my present head with a few remarks on the first.

As Victoria lies between the degrees of 35 and 39 of south latitude, it is unnecessary to remark, that the ample areas of its cultivable soil are suited to yield all the cereals of central and temperate Europe. These parallels of the south, as is commonly known, are, on the average, less warm than the corresponding north. Victoria, in this respect, corresponds to southern France, and the northern parts of Spain and Italy, but alike without the rigors of winter and the continuous high temperature of the summer months.

But yet the climate is unusually inconstant in its daily range, especially during the summer months, and the rains are far from regular. The country has not yet, indeed, been affected by severe drought; although short supplies of rain during winter and spring have curtailed alike the natural grass and the planted cereals, and injured and diminished the crop both of wool and grain. The dry season of the year usually

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comes on in December, when the warm dry air and bright sunshine would prove unfavourable to a green crop. But by this advanced time of summer the danger is over, and the earlier hot winds only give a speedy maturity to the lingering field. While the climate is too cool for the orange, it ripens the peach and the grape. Indian corn, too, can be cultivated. Those who are curious in particulars, may regret the blank flavour of the strawberry, the gooseberry, and the apple; whose full merits are not, perhaps, to be enjoyed without the accompanying infliction of the bleak skies of Scotland and the hard frosts of America.

The grand attraction of a colony to the depressed masses of the home population,—the attraction that annually tears thousands of families from their old associations and their clinging friends to form for themselves a new home in the remote wilderness,—is the facility of the acquisition of land; and in this respect Victoria has never yet done herself justice, or fully put forth all the inducements she can command as a set off to the greater proximity, as regards the mother country, of rival fields of emigration. Two obstacles have materially interfered from the beginning; the first being the preoccupation for squatting purposes, which has raised an antagonism of instincts between the sheep and the plough; the other the control of the waste territory, which until lately was tenaciously grasped by the Imperial government. Between these two foes the agricultural interest was dwarfed from the outset, and the gold discoveries

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with regard to the labour market have recently added a third obstacle.

The system of selling land on the part of the government is by public auction, and for cash at a minimum upset price of 1*l.* per acre. Prior to the gold discoveries, the sales of land were small and inadequate. The law contemplated or at least permitted of a large surplus of lands which, as the unbought proportion at the sales, would be afterwards open for selection at the upset price. But no stock of this kind worthy of note was maintained; and since the acquisition to the colony of so much wealth from the gold-fields, the lands that have been put forward for sale have been generally bought up and held by non-residents. But within the last three years there has been much greater exertion in bringing the public lands into the market. One of the earliest subjects brought forward by the colonial government before the recently assembled free legislature was the Land Question.

This question, although it embraces agriculture, is one of much wider scope. It is the question of homes for the mass of the colonists. The great want of Victoria is a resident country population; both because the natural longings of a great portion of the people are thus gratified, and because the face of the country has a pleasantly settled aspect, while its transactions rest on a broad basis of permanent property. To accomplish this great end, a free scope of selection is needed for the intending resident. The public attention has latterly been called to this point; and as the local government

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have now full power to modify the land laws, it is likely that, ere very long, the attractions of golden Victoria will be yet materially increased to the myriads of our home countrymen, by those facilities for prompt settlement upon her beautiful and diversified scenery, which are more important to national well-being than all the riches of her mines.

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CHAP. VII.

SQUATTING.

Pastoral Nature of the Country.—Rapid Mode of Colonising.—Squatting a favourite Pursuit.—Complaints and Claims of the Squatting Interest.—Regulations of 1844.—The Orders in Council of 1847.—Disputes of Interpretation.—View of the Intention of the Orders.—Approaching amicable Settlement.

I HAVE already remarked that a conspicuous feature of Victoria is its open and grassy character. The easy and rapid settlement of this country by the formation of depasturing stations for sheep and cattle, has been the chief cause of the early prosperity of the colony. At the first, only the best of the available country was in this manner settled upon, and that almost immediately. The earlier squatters, like Abraham and Lot of old, cast their eyes over the empty downs and open forests; and having chased off the troops of kangaroo, proceeded to construct their homesteads, while the sheep cropped the natural herbage and with periodical good faith rendered up their annual fleece. A took fifty square miles; B one hundred; C stepped further out to a still larger share; and D took what he liked, provided he moved

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onwards over the stringy bark range or the stony rises that bounded and defended C.

But at this time, and for eight or ten years past, every part of the country where a sheep or an ox could pick up a livelihood had been occupied. The traveller now meets the squatting homestead in the depths of forests and on the high mountain slopes. In this way, then, some eight hundred persons with their families and establishments occupy, in a pastoral sense, nearly the entire area of Victoria; excepting those rugged or sterile tracts that cannot be made available even for pasturage. Nearly two thirds of the colonial area are supposed to be thus available.

The squatter has a cormorant capacity for land. He asserts that two, three, even five acres, according to the varying qualities, are necessary for the support during the entire year, with all its climatic contingencies, of a single sheep. But when we consider that the lands which he thus occupies would be otherwise waste, they are employed truly to good purpose; for while the forests of other settlements give sport only to a handful of trappers, the waste lands of Victoria have already yielded many millions sterling from the annual produce of her natural pasturage.

In the early days of the colony, the squatting vocation had pre-eminent attractions for the youth and enterprise that poured into Port Phillip from the mother country. The pastoral employment upon natural herbage—a ready-made field as it were—was far more to the taste of the educated young emigrant than the sedentary

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toils of trade in the town, or the dull march and manual labours of a colonial agriculturist. The bush, as these pastoral wastes were called, was therefore to a great extent, at the outset, peopled by this class of colonists; who, to a ready hospitality towards the passing traveller and to one another, added the charm of the Attic salt, and contrasted a rough exterior with the cultivation and manners of gentlemen. Squatting became therefore, for the time, the aristocratic vocation, and retained more or less a distinction founded on so unexceptionable a basis, until the growing competition in all branches of colonial business eventually broke down and scattered this monopoly of the classic graces that clustered in the bush.

The public charges to which the squatter is subjected have ever been of a very slight description; and latterly, with the progress of the country in wealth and population, they are very small as compared with the value of his privilege of pasturage. They consisted at first of an annual sum of 10*l.*, payable to the crown for the use of the land, of whatever extent the station might be; and besides this there was a small assessment on the live stock, as a contribution to the general revenue for the expenses incurred in the protection of the squatting interest. The present charge is at the rate of 2*l.* 10*s.* for the pasturage adequate to each thousand sheep, besides an assessment of ½*d.* each six months upon every sheep, and 6*d.* per head upon the cattle. The first charge was levied by the crown, the second by the local legislature. But the latter being now installed

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in full authority over all colonial interests, a measure is just pending before the Assembly, whose object is to abolish this distinction, now no longer necessary, and impose a new charge suited to the altered circumstances of the country. The proposed charge was to average 2*d.* per acre, on a varying rate according to the value of the pasturage, and was expected to produce from three to four times more than the aggregate of the present twofold payment.

I have already alluded to the squatter's pasturage rights as being of more value than his annual payments to the government. The difference may be termed the good-will of his station, belonging to him by such right as priority of occupation and established practice conferred; and this good-will was as much the subject of purchase as the sheep and cattle themselves; sheep with station and sheep without station were ever two widely different articles of value in the live-stock market.

But the squatter's license was only from year to year. How far, therefore, could this good-will be regarded as his private and transferable property? From the beginning, the government seem to have discountenanced the idea of any such property, for it was held illegal to transfer a mere run or station; the reason being, as we may suppose, that the squatter had no transferable interest and no rights beyond his current year. But the sheep could be transferred, together with the depasturing right for the ground on which they were kept, subject to approval of the Crown Lands' Commissioner; which approval presently became

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very much a matter of course. And so glibly was this difficulty thus practically overridden, that runs were sold and resold with so many sheep—a handful, "more or less" — of even so many pigs, there, or supposed to be there, at time of sale.

But what as to the power of the crown to encroach on the property of the good-will, by enhancing the annual license-fee charged for the use of the land? There was no official pledge in this respect, nor any reason against it, further than that the then state of things had attained to a regular practice of some seven or eight years, and the public bought and sold stations and live stock on a common faith in its continuance. So stood the question in the year 1844, when the Governor of New South Wales, the late Sir George Gipps, adventured to alter that part of the regulations which emanated from the Executive. The object was to equalise the charge and to increase its amount for the larger stations. These new regulations of April 1844 were applicable also to Victoria, which was then a part of New South Wales, and they have continued in the main up to the present year (1857), so far as regards that part of the squatters' payment which has been distinctively made to the crown for the pastoral use of the land.

The Governor brought a hornet's nest about his ears, in the shape of the powerful interest whose good-will in more than one sense he was running counter to. Both the Governor's procedure and some wayward doings to which his Crown Lands Commissioners were

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addicted, under the infirmity of human nature, with their uncontrolled powers, called forth a great pastoral movement for the purpose of procuring a surer fixity of tenure by means of leases. This movement resulted in the famous Orders in Council of March 1847.

I have been thus particular in this now old question, because no colonist can be six hours in Victoria without hearing of the Orders in Council. These Orders of the Privy Council, which were intended to embrace a very important change in the crown lands' system, have been but slightly and qualifiedly acted upon in Victoria, and they now seem hastening to the position of a dead letter in the colonial statute book. Nevertheless they are still the subject of such hot controversy and are yet, and will long continue to be, so pertinaciously urged by the still powerful body for whose interest they were framed, that my subject would be incomplete without alluding to the chief bearings of the case.

These Orders were based upon a preceding Act of Parliament, by which Her Majesty in Council was authorised to make certain important alterations with reference to the crown land regulations for New South Wales. These alterations were to affect only the class of squatters, to whom it was intended to give certain distinctive privileges which they had represented as necessary for the success of their vocation. As regarded the rest of the colonial public the rules remained as before.

The Orders bear date at Osborne House, the 9th of March, 1847, and the preamble intimates they have the

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effect of law in New South Wales; which the reader must recollect still included at that time the future Victoria.

Chapter I. subdivides the colony into three classes of land:—1. The Settled district, to be comprised within certain distances around the colonial sea-ports, and a marginal border along the sea-coast and upon either side of certain rivers; 2. The Intermediate district, comprising the counties already proclaimed, or such as might yet be proclaimed on or before the 31st of December, 1848; 3. The Unsettled district, comprising the rest of the colony.

Chapter II., which refers to the unsettled district, is the grand skirmishing ground, on the twofold question of the unsuitableness of the rules it lays down to the general welfare, and the variety of interpretation to which some parts of these rules are exposed. It awards leases for periods "not exceeding fourteen years." The lessee's right is only for pastoral purposes, excepting such cultivation as may be necessary for his own establishment. Power is reserved to the crown, either to grant or sell any of the lands for public purposes. These purposes are specified in some detail, including town or village commonage, and the sentence ends (sec. 9.) with a power generally of "for otherwise facilitating the improvement and settlement of the colony." The land rent is fixed for the term of lease at fifty shillings annually for the area required to depasture each 1000 sheep; but this charge is distinct from any assessments the local legislature may choose to impose. The lands thus leased are not open for

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purchase, during the lease, to any but the lessee (sec. 6.), to whom, if he purchases, the price is to be not less than twenty shillings per acre, and if the land be considered worth more, it is to be valued, and sold to him at the valuation. This is the new feature of the pre-emptive right, given especially to the squatter, with the intention of encouraging him to effect improvements on his lands. He was not to be subjected to the usual competition at the auction sales, where the improvements he had made might be turned against himself. On the expiration of the lease (sec. 15.), the land may be put up for sale if the lessee declines his preemption. In that case the value of his improvement is to be secured to him. Renewals of the leases are provided for (sec. 16.), if less than one-fourth only of the comprised lands have been sold; and provided, too, that the lands in question have not meanwhile been included in either of the other two classes of districts, where a different and less favourable regulation prevailed. On a renewal of the lease, the charge was not to exceed fifty per cent. in addition to the previous charge.

Chapter III., referring to the intermediate district, authorises leases not exceeding eight years, but with power to make sales at the expiration of each year subject to sixty days' notice; the squatter in occupation having still his preemptive right. The fourth chapter relates to the settled district, and authorises leases of one year, giving power also to the Governor to allow the owners of lands in this district to depasture, free of charge, upon any adjacent unsold lands.

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Such is the substance of these famous Orders, which have held Victoria in the hot water of commotion for the last nine years. The natural non-critical reading, to an unbiassed mind, would unquestionably suggest that the Orders designed to give to the squatters in the unsettled district fourteen years' leases; that none of the lands comprised in these leases should be sold during these leases to any private person except the lessee; and that at the end of the term, in the event of any of the lands being required for sale, the squatter had the option in the first instance of exercising his preemptive right—a right that was made to extend to the respective squatting occupants over the whole colony, excepting the comparatively small areas of the settled district.

And such would probably have been the undisputed interpretation, had the Orders according to this reading been of a reasonable character and suited to the circumstances of the colony. But this was far from the case. Parliament and the Home Government had alike been labouring on a subject they knew very little about, and upon which they were exposed to all sorts of *ex parte* information. Such hazy ideas as Parliament enjoyed on this subject most probably took the shape given in the preceding paragraph. But the fact of consigning large tracts of a flourishing colony to sheep pasture for fourteen years seemed a procedure scarcely credible; and equally extraordinary was it to confer upon one class, in contradistinction to all the others, the invidious privilege of the preemptive right.

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This plain reading has been disputed. Of course it has, in a subject possessing such strong political bearings; and where the loopholes occur is not difficult to be seen. Are the words "not exceeding fourteen years" to be held to mean, as the rule, the full fourteen years? and can the general reservation regarding the improvement and settlement of the country be held to include the usual land sales? The portion of each of the two sentences, taken by itself and apart from the context and whole scope of the Orders, certainly carries the meaning that is hostile to the squatting privilege. I do not import into the argument the accompanying and subsequent home despatches relating to the Orders, as they are contradictory of each other; just as we might expect from documents drawn up by minds that were neither greatly interested, nor over well informed, in what they had taken in hand. A feature of more importance transpired, namely, that the first draft of the parliamentary bill had the absolute fourteen years for the leases; which was afterwards altered.

The Governor for the time being, Mr. La Trobe, thoroughly perplexed with the counter cries upon the subject, declined to decide the question one way or the other; neither issuing the leases, nor yet putting an end to the doubts. He referred the whole case back to the Colonial Office. This produced the despatch of 1853 of the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary, whose facile sweep through the opposing complications left little, if anything, more to be contended for by the anti-squatting public. By this despatch the squatter,

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even of the unsettled territory, had no privilege that prevented the usual land sales.

Still the fight remained hot in the colony, and the succeeding Governor, the late Sir Charles Hotham, appointed in the following year a Royal Commission to inquire into and advise him on the subject. Composed of very heterogeneous minds, all of them already perhaps long since made up on the question, this commission's report exhibits a formidable array of the protests of contradictory individual views; but by a majority, which included the legal advisers of the crown, it decided against the full-term view of the words "not exceeding fourteen years." So between the two stools the struggling squatters fell from their cherished height to the common level of their neighbours; for the Surveyor-General has ever since made no scruple of entering with his obnoxious implements upon the vast squatting domain, whether settled, intermediate, or unsettled.

The cry of the squatting leaders during the first years of the fight was for the Orders in all their integrity. The flag of "No Surrender" was unfurled on the furthest ledge of squatting interpretation. But after the advent of the gold-fields, the squatters could perceive that what might have been unsuitable previously was tenfold more so at this juncture, and accordingly they now turned their views and exertions to the question of compensation. They concluded that rights had been conferred upon them by the laws, which, whether suitable or otherwise to other interests, never-

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theless belonged to them. Their compensation scheme had reference to that margin of value pertaining to a run which I have called the good-will; and as the whole of this value was, by this energetic brotherhood, appropriated to the squatting interest, with a very liberal average of its value for the whole colony, the squatters' compensation emerged upon the colonial horizon as a right goodly item to the limited community that claimed it. Between two and three millions sterling was thus estimated as the consideration that stood between them and the relinquishment of the Orders in Council.

These claims, however, which had been rather discouragingly left to beat the empty air, have latterly been much modified, by an almost common consent of the squatting interest. The early squatting prestige and influence had helped sadly to spoil our friends of that aristocratic class. To listen to a squatter's tale of his rights and his wrongs and his claims upon the community, was as refreshing a diversion as a leaf out of "Punch," so soon as we were assured that it was equally unreal.

It was only justice to entertain the compensation question, for the Orders in Council could not have meant to convey no privilege at all. But the squatter's views were all directed to one side. He claimed compensation where he lost nothing; as his run remained to him after as well as before the Orders in Council. The good-will which he formerly possessed, or at least might have uninterruptedly enjoyed for an indefinite future was, by these Orders, even in their most favour-

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able interpretation, reduced to periods of one, eight, and fourteen years. Had the Colonial Government carried out these Orders, all the settled district stations should have been confiscated to the highest bidder after the first year—a procedure which, at that or any other time, would have resulted most oppressively. Last year the intermediate districts would have fallen into the same position, and five years hence the unsettled districts likewise; for the Local Government must of necessity have avoided the renewal of the leases by the means left in their power for that purpose. The ceding of preemptive right by the squatter could furnish no compensatory claims, as the Government must have taken care to protect the public by a due valuation. The object of it was to give the squatter the benefit of his improvements; and this was sufficiently effected by a regulation, made in the colony expressly with reference to this object of these Orders, that permitted him to purchase his homestead section at the upset price.

The compensation question then is narrowed down to a small compass, and might be amicably settled if the squatters were disposed to moderate views. The discussions in the new Parliament, in the beginning of the present year, on the Land Question, give promise that this amicable arrangement will be effected; and the mode of settlement will probably consist in recognising to a certain extent as the property of the squatter the good will of his run so often alluded to, and imposing upon him an annual rental that amounts to less than the marketable value of his grazing privileges.

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CHAP. VIII.

GOLD-MINING.

Gold-digging a fixed Vocation. — Steam-Engines. — Condition of Miners. — Pro-Capitalist *v.* Anti-Capitalist. — Rude Modes of Gold-digging and Washing. — Quartz-crushing. — Tarrengower Quartz-mining. — Powerful Machinery wanted.

PROVERBIALLY the most precarious and the least comfortable, the most followed after, and yet the least remunerated, is the vocation of gold-mining. The ten thousand soiled and sweating figures that are scattered along this valley, that have toiled all the long day, and are, perhaps, with the setting sun, preparing their candles and lanterns to descend to their "sinkings" and "drivings" for the prolonged labours of the night; these people have, in general, very inadequate earnings for such protracted toils. Those little tents or turf-built cots upon the rise of the valley contain their wives and families. There is little of domestic enjoyment, but there is ever a fund of inspiring hope. Nineteen adjacent parties have, for long weeks, been digging and washing out reluctant pennyweights of the precious metal, that divided to each a narrow and hardly-earned maintenance; but a five hundred pound

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nugget has just withstood the pick of the twentieth party, and their nineteen neighbours are inspired with as much alacrity as if nineteen others had fallen into each of their own hands.

This, however, is a picture that, in some of its least gainly features, has begun to pass away. For some time, at the outset, the gold-fields exhibited a miscellaneous gathering of the idle, the unsettled, and the curious, together with the great proportion of the newly-arrived immigrants. The desire to try the diggings was irresistible, and the trial system went the round of the colony; embracing even the walks of mental toil, where the delicate fingers that could ably wield the pen, must needs vary their exercise with a grasp of the miner's pick and a rock of his rough cradle. This promiscuous multitude exhibited a very irregular industry. They rushed hither and thither, with every breath of rumour, to try the fortune of any fresh gold-fields. These "rushes" were, for a time, constant features, until within the last two years, when they have all but disappeared. Gold-digging has assumed the character of one of the regular and fixed vocations of the colony. Those who do not fancy it, and many truly there are, or who have other occupations, have long since withdrawn, and the mere novelty has passed away for every one. Lands have been sold all around the gold-mines, where fields begin to wave with the yellow harvest; and towns have been planted where, already, the busy streets are guarded by police, and the local interests watched by free municipalities.

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A remarkable fact of these early and desultory diggings' labours is the largeness of the yield of gold per man as compared with subsequent years, when a more effective industry and better mechanical appliances were brought to the work. The earlier search of the miners seems to have guided them to spots richer than any they have since discovered, although many thousands have freely prospected over an auriferous area estimated at 16,000 square miles out of a total territory for the colony of 87,000. The quantity of gold raised from the mines in 1852, the second year only of gold-digging, has been estimated to have exceeded that of any subsequent year, although the mining population numbered from a half to a third only of what it afterwards attained. The aggregate quantity gradually diminished during the two subsequent years of 1853-54. Since that time, however, a large and somewhat regular increase has been observable. This feature is the more promising from the circumstance that, although the aggregate population upon and around the mines has increased with the colonial population generally, a large and growing proportion is now occupied in other vocations than mining, and in promoting the amenities of the digger's life, by local cultivation, building, and other useful progress.

The hard times, which the miners had to feel quite as often as the other classes, were a useful stimulus to them towards improving their rude methods of labour, and breaking through the strong class prejudices that are apt to haunt the toiling masses, whose hands are

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often more disciplined than their heads. The diminishing yield of gold called in successively the aids of horse-power, the steam-engine, and a variety of improved appliances of machinery, whose efficiency was powerfully aided by copartnery arrangements, with subscribed or borrowed capital. But this progress was watched with uneasiness and prejudice by the mass of the diggers, who carried on "individual mining," with the antagonistic perversity of the old handloom interest, but with far less excuse, as they could never reasonably argue that the produce of their own labours was diminished in value by the more effective operations of their neighbours.

The steam-engine first appeared on Ballarat flat in the third year of its auriferous history, and gave a powerful help to the laborious process of pumping out the water that ever gushed in from the porous superincumbent drifts of the deep sinkings. But this evident facility seemed a profane eluding of the common lot of toil. The miners who took advantage of it were like those degenerate Edinburgh fish-wives who outraged the ancient integrity of the order by using the railway trains, instead of tramping their half-dozen miles on foot with the hundredweight of haddocks on their back. However, when it was found that the engine of a copartnery drained not only the pit over which it was placed, but also the adjacent sinkings, the growl of disapproval became less loud; and when a fresh machine entered the field, a dozen or two of diggers followed in its wake, and sunk their shafts beside their powerful ally. Many

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engines are now scattered over Ballarat, as well as other gold-fields, and the prejudice of the miners against them has entirely given way, under the united influence of self-interest and common sense.

But all the mining prejudices are not centred in the steam-engine. The development of the mining interest, and the improved condition of the mining population, have been greatly hindered by the antagonism of the local ideas to large copartnery arrangements, capital, machinery, employed labour, and those grants or leases which may be found a sufficient inducement to capital. An *esprit de corps* still survives, although with expiring energies, which proscribes the employed labour of capitalists and companies, and summons the patriot digger rather to work on independent account for the precarious ten shillings a day, than accept the servile pound of a capitalist master.

Time cures all these conceits, and employed labour is now rather the rule than the exception upon the gold-fields. The antipathy to the privileges of capital—to the large rewards of men who contribute only money, and not personal toil, to the business of the gold-fields—has not yet been dispersed. But its strength is greatly reduced. It is, indeed, incredible that men should long continue to circumscribe their own progress, and restrict their own wages and earnings. To some extent it is due to these prejudices that public companies, capital, and machinery have as yet done little for the gold-fields of Victoria; but, so far as these associations have been tried, they have improved the employed miners' condi-

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tion by higher and more steady wages, and suggested to the others various improvements of process.

One of the Anglo-Australian mining associations, the Port Phillip and Colonial Gold Company, complains of our mining laws and miners' prejudices as among the causes of its non-success. The chairman, at a late meeting in London (7th of August, 1856), stated that "Australia was the only country in the world where protection was withheld from mining companies and their servants." The grounds for this complaint still to some extent continue, although happily by degrees giving way. It is a subject for time as well as for judicious government. The daylight will enter the hard heads of our mining countrymen more effectually by the gradual lessons of experience, than by the summary openings effected by musket-bullets. The political consideration lately given to the gold-fields has already operated beneficially in this respect. While these hives of industry had no political representation and no local institutions, they were a prey to stump oratory; which instinctively cherished the interests of the resident miner, and proscribed the foreign non-resident or the non-labouring capitalist. The Local Courts where, under a crown-nominated chairman, the elected members now frame their own mining regulations, are the effective schools where the miner is now being cleared of his prejudices, and where also his own views of the question have due consideration; for his opposition to the insatiate grasp of capitalist association is not always either in prejudice or ignorance.

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There is a path that renders justice and gives benefit to every interest. The most conspicuous party feeling that now divides the local courts is that connected with the pro-capitalist and the anti-capitalist questions. The only commotion at Ballarat since the political outbreak of 1854, was on this question. Without a very distinct recollection as to which side was victorious in the lawless part of the action, I have a fear that it was still the dense ranks of the anti-capitalists who chased their opponents from the irritating hustings, and whose thicker skulls had a decided advantage in this mode of warfare. On those fields where quartz-crushing prevails over the common washing processes, and where in consequence the benefits of association, machinery, and capital are more evident, the pro-capitalist party is already in the ascendant. The policy in this case is for the miners to procure for such localities a separate warden and local court of their own. The quartz miners of Tarrengower have felt themselves in this position. In the memorial sent to the Government from a late public meeting, they describe themselves as comprising fifteen hundred miners with their families, who raise collectively two thousand ounces of gold weekly. They complain of the unsuitable rules imposed by the remote local court at Castlemaine, which court was composed chiefly of alluvial miners, while they themselves were quartz-crushers, and it had not therefore properly understood their case. The Government will, no doubt, meet such cases by granting the request for a local institution to make the regulations suited for each locality.

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But even these Castlemaine regulations exhibit a great improvement upon the narrow ideas with which the minds of the miners were previously imbued. As a specimen, I may give here the substance of the latest Castlemaine regulations, which were gazetted 7th of November last, and which are those complained of at Tarrengower.

Claims or shares of claims to any extent may be held by any one individual, provided every such claim is daily maintained at work by the number of hands that conferred the right to it.

In expensive sinkings, such as those for quartz veins, or when alluvial sinkings are flooded, &c., and the mining party run short of means, they may, by registering, get an allowance of time to enable them to recover themselves.

Leases are limited to twelve months, but are renewable. The number of men to be employed, and the nature and power of machinery, are to be considered in awarding the area of the ground.

Such areas as the machinery would seem to require are to be leased to the proprietors, subject to eight days' notice for entertaining any valid objections to the giving of the particular ground indicated.

The recent regulations both at Creswick and Castlemaine are framed on the principle of granting all apparently reasonable requests, provided no valid ground of opposition is maintained by any of the surrounding public, after a few days' notice. At Creswick, for example, there is a decidedly improved liberality on that

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once jealously watched subject, the amalgamation of claims, by which several adjacent mining parties may join together, so as to avoid the needless sinking of more than one shaft. On this plan of hearing objections, the merits of mining questions will be arrived at, and such mere prejudice as cannot sustain itself by reasons will gradually disappear. The inconvenience to the Tarrengower miners arose chiefly from the necessity imposed upon them of maintaining a certain proportion of men to the extent of quartz vein allowed them; whereas improved machinery was enabling them to dispense with some of these men. The allowance by regulations was twenty running feet of quartz vein to each man actually at work.

Nothing is more striking to the eye, with respect to the gold-fields of Victoria, than the rudeness and poverty of the mechanical appliances in the extrication of the precious metal. In this middle of the nineteenth century we are so used to transfer the great bulk of our toils to the unwearying joints of iron machinery, that the scene of manual exertion throughout the mines conveys a thoroughly discouraging effect, alike from the great expending of human strength, and the extreme smallness of its material results. Before us is a flat of about the area of a square mile. Throughout its superficial drifts, which vary in thickness from a few feet to two or three hundred, there are at least ten, possibly one hundred, millions sterling of nearly pure gold, held together in a merely mechanical admixture. And yet with all the unrivalled machinery of the

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civilised world, we see as yet nothing imported into this field that will accomplish more than the earning, on an average, a remuneration that barely realises for the hardly-worked miner the daily wages current for the other industrial pursuits of the country. This shortcoming is surely not all due to the paralysing effects of mining prejudices.

The case with the auriferous quartz is still stronger. Large areas of the colony are traversed by reefs, both above and below the surface, which actual trial has shown to contain gold in proportions ascending even to thirty ounces per ton through the mass, and to more than double that proportion through particular veins. Yet is all this wealth—and it may be computed by thousands of millions—scarcely even broached upon by the trumpery machines as yet in use; which in the course of a day may pound down some two or three tons of the auriferous stone, and are supposed to have done their duty if they have extricated one half of the total gold that is estimated to be contained in the mass thus rudely treated. We are left to suppose that the art of gold-mining, like many other things, requires time for its development. Improvement comes gradually, as the subject is familiarised to the busy spirits of society, and ten thousand ingenious heads are continually brooding over the subject. We are convinced that the next age will make a very different disposition of the treasures that are locked up in the Victorian gold-fields; but we are concerned that the great achievement should not be done in our own time.

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If our gold-digging is little beholden to art, still less does the miner look to science. In the interests of the latter, Count Strzelecki, the Rev. Mr. Clarke, and Sir R. I. Murchison long since demonstrated the existence of gold in Australia; the two former by personal observation, the last by those inferential analogies that furnish eyes to the mind, and are among the finest of our intellectual triumphs. But no results followed from science, and it was left to less pretending eyes to point out the existence not of gold merely, but of a gold-field. Mr. Hargreaves, a colonist of New South Wales, had visited California under the general spell produced by its gold discoveries. He compared with the auriferous aspects of his new location the recollections of his own colony; and in the memorable year 1851, he had returned to point out an Australian gold-field.

Begun without the aids of science, our diggings have since been conducted on the same independent footing; and, if we except some amalgamating processes in quartz-crushing, there are few vocations that can boast such freedom from indebtedness to that great modern creditor in society's progress. Whether or not the digger is advantaged by this freedom is another matter. He himself holds the entire category of scientific rules on the subject at defiance. In the novel features of Victorian gold-digging he has certainly pushed beyond their hesitating and indistinct directions. The philosopher has been led by the miner into those "leads and gutters," and "second bottoms," that practical saga-

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city had enabled the latter to discover; and there the former is now gathering his notes, with the intention, we doubt not, of repaying his operative brother by the inferences he can draw to facilitate the proceedings of the future.

Although the present condition of the art of gold-digging strikes us as rude, and far beneath the general level of the day in other spheres of industry, yet it shows a considerable improvement upon earlier modes. At first the small hand-cradle was universally used, which a stout arm shook to and fro to disengage the specs of gold from the gravelly mass. When I visited Ballarat within a month after its discovery, the cradle was universal. An ingenious blacksmith was pointed out who had devised a horizontal motion of this primitive and fatiguing implement, by which the same outlay of bodily labour as the ordinary sort required gave a threefold effect. But he was an object of envy rather than of imitation; for the cradle on the common model was the standard article, and no one had leisure to make alterations.

The cradles by degrees became larger and more easy to work, and where streams of water could be commanded they took the shape of long troughs where the material was stirred with a shovel and the gold intercepted by cross-bars as the whole mass coursed down the sloping vessel. Although the gold thus mechanically admixed is mainly found in the gravel, yet much of it has passed through this porous repository and become lodged in subjacent beds, of a soft schistose and clay character. This material was puddled in large tubs, with

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plentiful additions of water to a consistency that allowed the heavy particles of gold to fall to the bottom. The great step in this process was the substitution of the horse for the man, and of the puddling machine and its spacious reservoir for the tub. The washing power was thus increased ten or twenty fold. These machines are now scattered in thousands over the gold-fields. The great difficulty is the quantity of water they absorb in a dry and thirsty land like Australia, and the immense arrears of the "sludge;" which the wolves that wait for the stream below will not allow the lambs above them to disgorge into the bed of the creek.

The operation of digging for gold was at first a simple and straightforward procedure, going little beyond what is commonly called surfacing, or digging everywhere among the surface gravel and the upper layers of a light but variably coloured shale called the pipe-clay. For a time everything that came up was washed. But some began soon to find that everything was not equally auriferous. Large nuggets were unexpectedly reached, both near the surface and deep below it. No rule could ever be established as to these princely visitors. But, in general digging, certain signs began to be understood. The junction ground of the gravel and shale was generally the richest. A hand diligently groping over the irregular surface made by the inclined layers of the shale, would come upon a "pocket" which yielded some ounces or even pounds of solid gold. Veins consisting of an irregular succession of small particles of gold would be met with in the pipe-clay,

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and were always held as an indication that more of the same might be hard by. The brown tinge of iron often showed where the quartz was richest in gold; and, in short, by the general aspect around him, an experienced digger could tolerably guess where there was gold worth digging for, and where there was not.

There was a general resemblance of feature between one gold-field and another, although the gold that each respectively yielded was not exactly of the same appearance and quality. The Ovens gold has always been distinguished for the minuteness of its pieces, and that of Ballarat for its purity, which excels in this respect the gold from any other Australian field. Ballarat, indeed, takes the position alike of the oldest gold-field of any note, and that which has yielded the largest quantity of the precious metal. From the month of September, 1851, when the government first established the armed escorts, to the end of 1856, there was sent down from Ballarat, by these conveyances, no less than 2,801,729 ounces of gold, of the value, in consideration of its purity, of upwards of 4*l.* per ounce. It was at Ballarat where the spirit of enterprise was most prevalent, and where the most curious developments were made of the auriferous system of the country.

Although a general impression prevailed that nothing was to be attained by the labour of "bottoming" the pipe-clay, which seemed of an endless depth to those who had given a spare day now and again to its soundings, yet a strong curiosity prevailed to ascertain what did really exist below it. After a time it was sounded,

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and as considerable quantities of gold were met with at such depths, although apparently in very uncertain localities, the practice of this deep sinking became very general; although it seemed doubtful whether, even on the average, it yielded as much as the shallower digging. But the miner was not long in recognising a particular drift bed in these depths, in which alone was the gold commonly found; while outside of this bed it was seldom met with in quantity sufficient to be worth working for. The next step was to trace a "lead" through this bed, and within this lead a "gutter," when a plenteous helping awaited him.

The gutter may have been a continuous feature in the past when it rolled its golden washings through the valleys of the ancient surface; but as it did not leave in its channel a continuous indication of gold, so the lead was constantly being lost by the eager miners, who, in the pursuit, were compelled to sink here and there new shafts of one or two hundred feet in depth. When a new lead was discovered or an old one regained, there was an immediate rush to secure the utmost areas permitted by the regulations. These were marked off in so many oblong squares across the probable course of the lead. When the lead was struck, a large reward was generally the result; but when it was missed, a serious outlay was incurred to no purpose in the sinking and pumping, puddling and slabbing of the long shafts.

These uncertainties gave rise to a system of co-partneries and share-taking among the miners in each

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other's enterprises. In this respect Ballarat resembled a great mercantile exchange, where whole, half, and quarter shares, besides minuter fractions, were continually being bought and sold, at rates that incessantly varied with the latest reports, either from the shaft itself that the shares pertained to, as the perpendicular sinking or the horizontal driving afforded any ground of hope, or from such of its close vicinities as might be supposed to affect the direction or richness of the lead. This system tended greatly to equalise the uncertainties of the deep sinking. It also enabled those who had spare means, to invest them with probable advantage in these shares, and thus furnish the requisite capital to their poorer neighbours, by which these were in a position to meet the heavy preliminary expenses of the deep sinking.

It is important to remark that the proverbial uncertainty hitherto in this auriferous system may not be of long continuance. A committee of the late Legislature of Victoria, appointed to examine into mining resources, have alluded to the remarkable features just spoken of, namely, the "bottoms" of the drifts, where the gold is now chiefly found by deep sinking; and the report expresses itself confidently that the leads may, by observation and experiment, be predicable, in much the same way as with the coal-fields.

The preceding remarks have been directed to the extraction of the gold from its loose admixture with the drift beds. I have yet to notice the extending operations of quartz-crushing, which, although the last to be

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taken up, and a business still prosecuted in a very inefficient manner, promises far to exceed the other in its ultimate importance. Nature may be regarded as a vast crushing apparatus, which, for ages of the past, has been pounding down the quartz-rock, the great matrix of the gold, and scattering the bright metallic particles throughout those auriferous drifts where we are now engaged in collecting them. But we may bring to bear upon the great masses of this quartz a still better machinery than that of nature. Our mechanical appliances to grind down the rock may not be more sure than those of nature, but they are far more expeditious. We shall do well to make our own direct attack upon the great storehouse.

Quartz-crushing attracted but little notice for the first two to three years of the gold-fields. Here and there was a solitary effort, but the machinery was so weak and ineffective that, after a time, the trial was generally abandoned. As it began to be known, however, that the quartz-rock was not only practically limitless in quantity, but also rich beyond the experience of any other country, the trials abandoned by one party were soon resumed by another. From three to seven ounces of gold to the ton of quartz, which the rock was known very commonly to contain, seemed quite an accessible prize. The extra richness of occasional veins further stimulated the work, as some of these literally sparkled with gold, and were so charged with the metal that a common hand hammer might have been employed upon the quartz with remunerative results.

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But so poor was the machinery as yet brought to bear, that little beyond these rich lodes was found profitable; and quartz-crushing was soon proverbial as the most uncertain of hazardous games, and about as sure and prompt a mode as could well be found of sinking one's surplus funds. I allude chiefly to the results of the copartneries that were repeatedly formed by non-resident parties, who furnished the capital and machinery, but whose expected profits had still to surmount the barrier of the salaries and wages of management. The expense of repairs, and the delay occasioned when the machinery sustained injury, made a serious blank in the account; and it generally happened in the out-of-the-way regions of quartz-crushing, that machinery in the care of others than its own proprietors had a special tendency to go wrong.

After many trials of this mode of quartz-crushing, both by small copartneries formed in Melbourne and elsewhere in Australia, and by a few home companies on a larger scale, it has now been all but entirely abandoned. A lingering business may still be done in crushing quartz for surrounding mines at so much per ton, or by arrangements that embrace as copartners all the persons employed. The great cause of failure has hitherto been, not the unproductiveness of the quartz, but the inadequate machinery, both as to its scale and its ineffectual handling of the quartz. The result, for the present at least, has been with this, as with many other businesses, that it will remunerate those only who make it their own vocation, and who are per-

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sonally on the spot: in short, the resident miners; and by these the quartz-crushing is now carried on to a large and increasing extent.

The Tarrengower quartz mining has been alluded to, and some idea may be formed of its importance from the description which I here give of mining proceedings and prospects there. The account was given to me by one of the quartz miners of that locality, just prior to my leaving the colony, and refers to the operations of the beginning of the present year.

My informant worked on a quartz seam known as Lyell's Reef. It was two feet in thickness, and of a length and breadth not yet ascertained. The upper edge had a semicircular form, cropping out at the apex a little above the surface. The plane of the seam dipped about 45°. "Claims" are marked off along the surface in the direction of the seam, in the proportion of sixty running feet to each party of three men. The miners work downwards on the seam in the direction of the dip, and all belongs to the respective parties in that direction within the sixty feet of width. Those who had claims where the rock came to the surface, had of course easier access to the quartz than those who were at a distance on either side, and had to sink considerably, owing to the semicircular form of the reef; some were in this way sinking sixty feet below the surface, and were at great preliminary outlay, as the intermediate material was chiefly hard rock.

The quartz of this reef contains from fifteen to thirty ounces of gold to the ton. The gold in this large pro-

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portion is not confined to portions or mere veins, but is scattered through the mass, and much in the same proportion everywhere in the upper or the lower part, as far as yet tried. The auriferous seam has a north and south direction; there are small leaders, like narrow streams, which branch off in an east and west direction. They are from six to eight inches wide. These have little or no gold. Some were proposing to dig down these narrow seams, in the hope of arriving at a rich seam, but the costly experiment had not been tried.

The claims at and near the surface of this quartz mine remunerated very well. It seems incredible how they should not have done so in any part of so rich a seam. The operations, however, are of a most expensive character, both from the high wages of labour and the cost of laying down the necessary machinery in the far interior. To these must be added the expense and delay caused by accidents to the machinery.

The whole question may be said to be comprised in the power and effectiveness of the machinery. In my informant's case, which I presume was the case of the others around him, the machine crushed but two tons daily. This quantity it did well, but it could get through with three tons — perhaps not with such thorough grinding. The machine reduced the quartz to a very fine state, which it was thought must have disengaged all the gold. When the owners of these machines were not crushing for their own account, they engaged in crushing contracts for other miners, who brought their heaps of quartz like so many sacks of

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wheat to be ground at the mill. The usual charge was 4*l.* per ton; but machines that ground so finely as the one I alluded to would command 6*l.* per ton. Powerful machinery is evidently the want here. Is it impossible in Britain to construct a machine that will crush at the rate of one hundred tons of this quartz daily? If that is not impossible, and surely it is not, I think a time is not far distant when we shall be called on to form an estimate of Victoria's wealth beyond anything yet thought of.

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CHAP. IX.

A TOUR TO THE VICTORIAN GOLD-FIELDS.

Melbourne to Ballarat.—Royal Commission.—Miners' Franchise. — American "Telegraphs."—North-West Highway from Melbourne. — The Moonee Ponds. — Flemmington and Essendon. — Scotch Thistles. — Treeless Plains. — Pentland Hills. — Bacchus Marsh. — Stringy Bark Tree.—Ballarat. — The Diggings on Sunday. —Chinamen and other Foreigners. — "Deep Sinking."—Sad Results of the Riots at Ballarat.—Local Newspapers.—"Jumping of Claims." —Christmas and the Races. —Creswick Diggings.

ALTHOUGH the excursion that is comprised in this and the three following chapters was undertaken above two years since, this account of it, which occupied a few leisure hours after my return to Melbourne, is still so applicable as a picture of rural and diggings' life in the colony, that it might in that general way pass for an expedition of yesterday. I have, therefore, given it a place in this volume, to render more complete the view of the golden colony that I have here endeavoured to give to the reader.

To make various remarks more intelligible, I may state that the occasion of the journey was the appointment, by the late Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, of a royal commission to inquire into the condition of the

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gold-fields, of which body I had the honour and advantage of being a member. Great discontent had been repeatedly manifested by the miners on a variety of grounds, which had been the subjects of incessant stump oratory and agitation; and the commission had scarcely been inaugurated when the Ballarat outbreak took place. This sad affair came off upon the 3rd of December, 1854, and the commission started on its journey a fortnight afterwards. Feeling called upon to sympathise in a great measure with the miners, who had laboured under a variety of unequal and unsuitable regulations, the commission recommended a complete change in the gold-fields' administration. The chief points of change recommended were the substitution of a duty on gold for the direct license fee, the introduction of a simple copartnery system, the award of the franchise to the miners, and the delegation of the contentious subject of mining regulations to local elective bodies presided over by an official chairman. These recommendations having been all carried out in a spirit of good faith by the Governor, there has since been an end of political turmoil throughout the mining districts.

The miners were all admitted to the franchise, under the nominal qualification of twenty shillings a-year, chargeable on their Miner's Right or permission to dig and appropriate the gold. It is worthy of remark with reference to the recent colonial legislation on the same broad equality of principle, that this universal suffrage, which it may practically be called in the usual meaning

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of the word, has operated with the most conservative effects on the previously dissatisfied diggers.

Our party, consisting of seven persons, was mustered at seven o'clock of the morning of the 16th December, the midsummer of Australia. The country had been very dry from inadequate supplies of rain during the previous winter, a circumstance that usually makes the whole summer here an unpleasant one. In our case, however, a shower had fallen the night before, which had laid the dust and partially cooled the air. The wind blew from the hot quarter, the N.N.W., but, under the circumstances alluded to, it fanned us pleasantly enough as we drove along.

As to our conveyance, however, the first inspection caused a certain measure of alarm alike for our bones and our dignity. One of these vehicles was intended for the passengers, the other for their baggage. It was not without some deliberation that we decided between the rival carriages, which of the two had the more creditable appearance; but we still thought it desirable to make an effort to get something still better for the conveyance of our persons. These vehicles were American "Telegraphs," very common commodities here now; and very odd-looking articles they certainly appear, at first sight at least, to British eyes. Perhaps this is only at first sight. Our streets are now full of Yankee conveyances of every kind. They are very light and very cheap, and so far are an acquisition. With reference to "Telegraph" kinds, and others of extra strength, we understood that

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none else could be depended on, in the matter of springs and fittings, to pass us safely through all the varieties of road we were likely to meet with. We longed for a good easy English carriage; but when the chances of the colonial roads were duly placed before us we made up our minds to what was offered. Our dignity was further satisfied from learning that the governor and his lady had already driven to the gold-fields in the same grotesque article.

Driving through a medley of street lines, and of allotments partially filled up with houses of all shapes and dimensions, forming the northern portion of North Melbourne, we emerged from this Babel upon the great north-western highway to the Mount Alexander and Bendigo gold-fields. One side of this road—or street as it might still be called, for we had not yet passed the town boundary—was thickly planted with buildings, the other side being open, and reserved by the authorities for sites of public edifices, including a University, whose boundaries were already indicated to us by a neighbouring wooden fence. The street was here very wide, not less, I think, than one hundred and fifty feet, which gave a rather imposing aspect to the long vistas occasionally obtained from the summits of the undulations that variegate the surface. Only three short years ago, this undulating surface was covered with grass, and dotted over with gum trees. The traveller, as he sallied forth to the bush, in those days gone by, would turn his nag when at the highest spot, to take a last view of the thriving capital of Victoria and the

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bright blue waters beyond, where some considerable shipping already well-attested the progress of a flourishing young colony. Since then, however, all had been changed into a wild and tumultuous development. The waters of Hobson's Bay were scarcely visible beneath a forest of five or six hundred vessels. The grassy glades of North Melbourne were now a hard and dusty surface, cut up everywhere with roads, and disturbed with the incessant noise of the traffic to the interior. This ground, now planted over with tenements of wood, iron, and other materials of the most surprisingly grotesque appearance, gave an effect to the whole scene of anything but a pleasing nature; unless we are to place the visible evidences of material prosperity among our fellow-mortals as compensation for every defect in the beauties and harmonies of landscape and arrangement.

Two miles from Melbourne, we crossed the Moonee Ponds, by the excellent macadamised road that now aids the traveller. These "Ponds," as they are called, forming a winding chain of water-holes, afford, close to Melbourne, a genuine specimen of Australian river peculiarities. After a course of twelve or fourteen miles, they terminate in a salt lagoon, having no outlet. This lagoon at its eastern extremity, touches upon the western bounds of the city, from whence the Williamstown railway emanates, skirting the eastern and northern margin of the lagoon flat. The Moonee Ponds have seldom any stream in the winding-bed excepting during very wet weather. The water, in many

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of the holes or ponds, is brackish; in others, it is fresh, according to the components of the soil on which the waters rest. When there is a stream, therefore,—generally a very feeble one,—the whole has a brackish character, rendering the water unsuitable for drinking to the population, although still available for cattle and for other uses. This little creek meanders through a very fine agricultural country, particularly in its lower course near Melbourne, where there are many farms, country-houses, and gardens.

Flemington is a bustling little suburban village, well supplied, as usual in this country, with public houses; which here, as elsewhere, stand out as the best and most conspicuous mansions of the place. We were agreeably surprised at the stir of trade going on, and the number of drays that were being loaded for the various gold-fields, to which the highway we were now upon conducted. Further on, above a mile, came Essendon, where we found much the same traffic, with carts and drays drawn by horses or bullocks, and covered with sugar and flour-bags, and a glittering array of tin-dishes, pannikins, and other tinker's wares.

The made road now ceased for a while. The natural surface was so hard and smooth as to make of itself an excellent path; but where it had once been broken through, we had a hole or rut full of sand or dust. This kind of soil, too, was sadly ravaged by gutter-streams after rain, when the previously protecting grass had been extirpated by the traffic. We were glad to take up again with Macadam, as we did shortly

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after, and to survey at our leisure, as we drove along the goodly highway, the crops of hay that now variegated the country on either side. The high prices of hay and oats since the gold discoveries, had led to the cultivation of these crops in much more than the usual proportion. Farmers had seen oats at a pound per bushel, and hay at 35*l.* per ton, when they could not get 25*l.* per ton for the best flour.

After coursing over some high and rather sterile-looking plains, and crossing several deep creek beds, where, however, there was no running water, we crossed the northern tributary of the Yarra, called the Salt Water River, upon a very substantial new bridge, and dashed into the little township of Keillor, where we had arranged to take breakfast. By far the most conspicuous object here, was the Scotch thistle, which seems to threaten the whole country round. Within the last ten years, this plant has been acquiring a footing in this colony, which it will now be most difficult to dispute. From the formidable thistle-fields, already in existence, the breezes of every summer send forth innumerable seeds to colonise the obnoxious weed everywhere over the land. We observed places where even a man on horseback would have been overtopped by these plants, which waved to and fro in the wind like some giant corn-field.*

Between two and three miles beyond Keillor, we diverged from the main highway of the Mount Alex-

* A measure is now in force for the extirpation of this noxious plant.

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ander and Bendigo gold-fields to pursue a westerly route towards Ballarat; as this gold-field was to be visited first, in consequence of the alarming accounts received by the Commission regarding the discontent of the mining body, amongst whom a most serious outbreak had occurred shortly after the Commission's appointment. The "post and rail" fences on each side of the road showed some indications of settlement; although we should have greatly preferred to look upon still higher attainments, and refresh our eyes with pretty homestead cottages and fields of waving grain, for which the soil and climate were alike adapted. We had now the unmade or bush road to put up with. This was often as good as could be desired, but in many places the character of the surface gave us a very rough drive; and when considerable traffic on these unmade ways was confined to the limits of the road between two stout fences, the track had something of the aspect of a ploughed field. After a short course between the fences we emerged upon the open plains.

These treeless plains! To the westward of Melbourne extends a great area of this bare and flat country. It is singularly monotonous to the traveller, and in earlier days of the colony, when the bearings and land-marks were few and little known, he was apt to be lost in an ocean of grass. If overtaken by night, so that the general bearings of remote objects were lost, his account was considered settled until dawn, unless the light of some distant pastoral homestead or solitary shepherd's hut gleamed through the darkness. In

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striking for this friendly light, perhaps two or three hours of scrambling through steep or stony beds of winding creeks awaited the traveller. But a hospitable reception was a balm for everything, and in these early times this was generally found at the isolated squatting dwellings.

There is still left much of this early character of these plains; but roads, houses, fields, and fences are now so numerous, that the romantic luxury of actually losing one's way cannot so easily happen. The numerous roads are a sad obstacle to the realisation of such an adventure, for, once upon a track, we have but to follow our guide, which is sure to lead us to some habitation of man. Twelve or fourteen years ago things in this respect were very different. The sun was then ever the best guide in these trackless wilds. Failing him, the prudent traveller would be armed with a pocket compass. Without one or other aid he might prove a benighted traveller indeed. I myself have more than once had a race with the sun to reach some point of view, with a sufficiency of light, where sure bearings were to be had for the homestead or pathway I was in search of.

There was considerable jolting in driving over these plains, for, plain as they seemed at a distance, the small irregularities of surface made a very rough motion. This was particularly the case if we were upon a track not yet much beaten down by hoofs and broad dray wheels. We pulled up at a solitary inn, or public-house, perched on the rocky bank of a small creek,

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where our party found the ready "nobblers" of brandy-and-water.

We were now approaching a more picturesque country, and soon began to ascend the grassy slopes of the Pentland Hills. These hills are remarkable, as being of a rich soil, covered with grass, and destitute of trees. How these naturally cleared soils should thus exist in Australia has not yet, I think, been explained, any more than the open forest character of so much of its scenery. The soil seemed very rich, to judge from the depth and black hue exhibited in the little gullies formed by the rains. We observed some farms a mile or two to the north of the road upon these hills, standing out in verdant contrast to the dried-up and yellow grass. From the highest point, looking backwards, we enjoyed an extensive view towards Melbourne and Port Phillip, defective, however, as almost all Australian views are, in the want of interior water-scenery.

We came next to Bacchus Marsh, about thirty miles from Melbourne, and consisting of a flat of rich land, where there have been farm settlements for some years. The flat winds for several miles between bounding hills, and has rather a pretty rural and home-looking aspect in connection with a plentiful dotting of farms and cottages. But we were disappointed with the rude appearance of most of these dwellings, which sadly wanted finish, neatness, and comfort. We passed a flour-mill that was in course of erection, and what seemed to be a second already at work. The population of "the Marsh" was considered to be about a thousand. The

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entire flat was quite dry at the time of our visit, but probably during the wet weather of winter and spring some parts of it well merit the title of a marsh, as evidenced by the rank and tufty character of a great deal of the grass. There was a winding creek bed through the flat, with occasional water-holes, but no running stream. The surrounding hills were of a sterile character, and covered with timber. We halted for the night at a tolerable inn, a brick building, where we were privileged with the high quartering of not more than two persons in one bed-room.

Next day we pursued our journey through a country more thickly timbered, chiefly with the tall, straight "stringy-bark tree." The wood of this tree gives a fine indigo dye; and, had we more labouring hands in the colony, something might be made also of the fibrous bark — something more advanced in manufacturing arts than its present use of roofing or flooring the huts and outhouses of the interior. From its splitting facilities the wood is useful for slabs, posts, and rails used in mining and in fencing or enclosing lands. We breakfasted at Ballan, a poor-looking little township, but now likely to get larger and richer from some gold fields that have since "broken out" in its vicinity and near to Mount Blackwood.

Passing on, we came, after mid-day, to a pastoral station, with a homestead of comparatively old standing surrounded by a well-stocked garden. We were hospitably entertained with some lunch, and afterwards picked currants and blackberries in the garden. Other

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fruits were not yet ripe. There were plenty of pleasant flowers, and several large old gum-trees agreeably mingled the natural with the cultivated state. Our host was surrounded by a wife and family, and seemed to be happy with the abundance of the good things of life.

BALLARAT.

We reached Ballarat in the afternoon, and took up our quarters on the rising ground of the township at "Bath's Hotel," from whose windows we commanded an extensive view of the hive of industry below us. It was a Sunday afternoon when we arrived. We had expected to be able to have gone the whole distance from Melbourne, about seventy-five miles, the previous day. But these hopes were frustrated by the state of the roads and the roughness of our vehicles. We were in this matter consoled by the assurance that no gentler vehicles would survive the ordeal.

The quietness of the diggings on a Sunday is striking. There seems a general agreement to cease from the usual occupation, consequently it is extremely rare to find any party engaged in actual mining on that day. But it may be easily understood that, situated as the miners are, they have few resources to fall back upon for employment of mind or body during that period of rest. Many thousands are brought together, separated at once from the comforts and restraining influences of a home and family, and pursuing a voca-

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tion of a speculative and irregular character. It is not surprising that the clergymen should complain of a thin attendance and an uncertain flock. We observed some games in process, and a crowd looking on; many were chopping wood or performing little duties about their tents. The pipe and cigar seemed a great resource. Most were well dressed, and many women and children were walking about or sitting at the entrances of tents. Bills were posted on the gum-trees along the road, intimating that the clergyman of some particular sect would preach that day, and giving the hour and place. The churches were commonly made of canvass, but we observed that one, the Episcopalian, was a wooden structure, and of a design whose single merit seemed to be that of originality. We also remarked one of stone that was being built in the township, and belonging to the Wesleyans.

In the evening there was a fine effect as we surveyed from our commanding position the valley of the Ballarat gold field. The numerous lights from the tents, and the dim outline of wood and canvass edifices blending with the background, conveyed the impression of a vast city hushed in the arms of night. Early next morning I sallied forth to see a little of practical mining. The flat immediately below the hotel was not much crowded. It was close to a place called Golden Point, famous in the earlier times of Ballarat three years previously, but now "worked out." This "point," which I recollected in its glory during a previous visit to this gold-field, was now an upturned, unsightly mass,

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without a tree or blade of grass. I resolved then to visit this old friend, and set out in its direction.

On the way I found several parties just commencing the day's work by drawing up and throwing out the water that had accumulated in their pits during night. These were distinguished as "wet diggings." The accumulation of water was considerable, especially on a Monday morning, and with the inefficient appliance of a bucket and windlass, would take up hours of time in being got rid of. Golden Point was found so much richer than this part of the flat, that the latter was at first not thought worth working. Necessity, however, makes us think more of small mercies, and many places that possessed no attractions three years ago are now eagerly competed for.

Approaching Golden Point, and the old worked-out grounds generally, I encountered great numbers of Chinamen. These people have only lately begun to come amongst us, but once begun they pour in by legions. There were supposed to be from two to three thousand on this gold-field. They seemed to be always busy, but in an inefficient and unsystematic manner. They seemed to prefer the rewashing of the old grounds rather than taking up new grounds; being averse probably to the expense, delay, and uncertainty of deep sinking. They are stated to make very little gold—not more, it was then said, than about three shillings worth a day each; but they seem to be always provided with enough of money, and are punctual in taking out their licenses, although quite disposed on every chance to

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cheat the government officer out of some part of the payment. In this matter no amount is beneath their notice, or deemed unworthy of an effort to save it. A Chinaman may sadly grumble at having to pay a shilling, but he will be delighted if successful in paying away ninety-nine pounds as a hundred; his thoughts being all upon the pound saved, not the ninety-nine lost. I tried to converse with them, but could make nothing of it beyond a few conventional words or phrases, which they glibly sent forth without perhaps exactly knowing their meaning. The great numbers of "these creatures" that are moving about impart an odd and foreign aspect to the scene.

Gold-digging at Ballarat proved to be rather an interesting process. Comparing the art now with its condition in October, 1851, I could perceive that great changes had been effected. Nothing struck me more in this difference than the business-like knowledge and decision with which miners spoke of their avocation, and the methodical and imperturbable manner in which they encountered its uncertain results. The great alteration in mode since I was last here was the "deep sinking." For some time at first the depths of the pits had been limited to a stratum termed the "pipe-clay," formed of decomposed granitic or quartzy materials, underlying the auriferous gravel, and of great thickness. The surface of this formation, a soft shaly rock of a light hue, was commonly recognised as the "first bottom," to distinguish it from the second bottom afterwards encountered by the diggers who had ad-

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ventured through the bed of pipe-clay, and chanced upon another auriferous drift which rested upon a lower bottom. "To bottom," as it was concisely termed, that is, in the sense of reaching this lowest base, required in some places a depth of nearly 200 feet. We heard of one pit 194 feet deep, and a mining party was spoken of that expected to have to sink for 230 feet. These long shafts became very expensive, as it was necessary also to "slab" them, or build up their sides with split slabs so as to prevent water and material from pouring down the pit. A force of ten or twelve men was required for such a sinking, and as much as six months was sometimes occupied in exhausting such a "claim."

We took a saunter over the gold-fields to see the sites of the late rioting, and also the progress of mining generally. Bakery Hill, famous in the history of mining rights and wrongs for public meetings and furious speeches, was one of the local lions. We also inspected the site of the Eureka Hotel, which had been burned down in the previous October; and lastly, the place where the stockade had been erected by the rioters in the beginning of December. We heard various tales of these lamentable proceedings, which made us hope that for the good of humanity such scenes would not be re-enacted.

There were many European and American foreigners scattered over this gold-field, and we were told of one locality, about thirty miles off, where there were several hundreds, chiefly French, located by themselves. Ex-

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cepting the Chinese, the Germans seem in largest proportion among foreigners. Americans, French, and Italians number considerably. Many of our countrymen have come from other British colonies since the discovery of our auriferous soils. Gold possesses an attractive glitter superior to that of all else, and the further the observer is distant, its brilliancy seems all the greater. We shall likely, ere long, have a sprinkling of all the nations of the earth.

The Commission reassembled at the hotel, and after a delay of two days connected with the formalities of swearing in, proceeded to business. They were met by three delegates of the miners, who had been appointed at a public meeting held previously, and who now requested to be allowed, or rather who were invited, to sit during the examination of witnesses, and to assist in bringing forward evidence as to public and private grievances. A small group was generally collected outside, waiting to hear what was going forward.

Martial law had been proclaimed shortly before, but this rigorous disciplination was discontinued after a few days, as being a precaution wholly unnecessary. And so doubtless it was, for a strong reactionary feeling had resulted amongst the miners with respect to the extremes of the late proceedings on the part of their fellows, and they were for the present tired even of public meetings and declamations. At the camp, however, as the official quarters were called, military precautions were still kept up, and we were challenged by the sentinels after dark, although walking along a main

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street of Ballarat. One poor fellow, who was trudging up to the township on his way from Melbourne, on the day after the stockade attack, was shot by one of the sentries as he approached the camp towards dusk, walking along the main road. There had been an alarm shortly before, by the discharge of some fire-arms from the mining flat below the camp, and apparently directed towards that invidious official quarter, for several shots were described as having rattled about the ears of officers and men. The sentinels on duty had promptly responded. Regarding with true military disregard every one beyond them as, in such circumstances, an enemy, they fired off whenever they saw an object, one of the shots coming in close proximity to a cluster of people at Bath's Hotel. The traveller alluded to had, unfortunately, arrived on this dangerous ground just after these occurrences. He lay ill with an amputated leg while the Commission was sitting, and died shortly afterwards.

We visited the camp to return the civilities of the officers. General Sir R. Nickle and Colonel M'Arthur were then in charge. They had arrived with an accession of military, but after the stockade attack; and now as such a force, I think about eight hundred altogether, appeared unnecessary, they were preparing to depart again for Melbourne. We took this opportunity of paying a visit to the wounded in the hospital. With the humanity of the age the authorities were attending to the victims of both sides. There were not more than about fifteen altogether, a number of those among

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the rioters having been conveyed away by their comrades. This was the first occasion of my visiting a scene whose human suffering was thus so direct an infliction of man himself. The scene, at least to those unused to it, was a very saddening one. We are accustomed to hospitals and infirmaries, where science and philanthropy are alike engaged in a high moral warfare to abate the natural ills that flesh is heir to. But such an edifying spectacle has a range of associations widely different from the one presented to us at camps in general, and at the Ballarat camp on this occasion, where odious and agonising, mutilating or mortal wounds are the direct result of human errors and passions.

We had one more melancholy duty, the attendance on the funeral of one of the military officers who had been severely, and as it now proved mortally, wounded during the stockade assault about three weeks before. This was Capt. Wise, a gallant young officer alluded to in the Commissioners' Report. The day was hot and dusty as the *cortége* moved along to the place of burial, a slightly rising ground nearly a mile from the township. This rural cemetery was still wild and open, no fence having as yet been placed around it, for even this is an expensive process at a gold-field. But some excuse appeared for this apparent negligence, for the ground had evidently been but recently devoted to its present purpose, as the small number of graves amongst a large population indicated.

Although on this particular day the weather was hot, it had been usually hitherto for some time quite the

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reverse—so cold indeed, that, although in the midst of summer, we would have welcomed a cheerful wood fire. The situation is elevated, and was said to be unusually cool, and subject to a full share of the changeableness of Victoria's climate. Diarrhœa and other causes of sickness are still common here, and were, we believe, much more so formerly.

We found here a local newspaper—of course at war with the authorities local and general—and we amused ourselves with the violent style of the "leaders." A newspaper is now published at each of the principal gold-fields, and is the means of diffusing much information as to the nature and progress of mining. In matters affecting the rights and the wrongs of the miners, all the statements are not of course to be taken for truth. We received the Melbourne and Geelong papers on the day of publication—the latter, in fact, but little after midday; which we considered creditable in the absence of railroads, and with a very poor and partial substitute of common highways. These exploits, however, were not the doings of the post—her Majesty's mails generally lumbering behind every one else's—but of private conveyance companies, amongst which some of our new American colonists were conspicuous. Cobb and Co., whether the name be a genuine appellation or only a handy abbreviation of Yankee commerce, takes the position in Victoria of the Pickfords, Bianconis, and Croalls of the old country.

Christmas time, which came on while we were at Ballarat, was solemnised by a general holiday-making.

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Amongst other regulations, or rather mutual understandings with the miners themselves, and between them and the authorities, there was, for that day at any rate, to be no "jumping of claims." This expression means the taking possession of a claim or piece of digging ground when the owner or previous occupant had not been at work upon it or in charge of it within a certain prescribed period — twenty-four hours, I think. On proof of this fact the claim might be lawfully "jumped," and this jumping became a sort of trade among "waiters upon providence" and the less industrious or merciful among the miners, who made no scruple of lying in watch and jumping wherever they had a chance. This practice, although sanctioned by regulations, was very grudgingly admitted into the catalogue of respectable doings.

We took an excursion to a large swamp or lagoon behind the town. This formed rather a pretty landscape scene. As a good deal of land had been sold around the bank, there was a dotting of tents and other indications of man's presence and industry. The shallowness of the water, with the reeds growing out it, reduced considerably the effect; but from the dryness of the previous winter and spring the level was much lower than usual. When here in October, 1851, I found the water several feet higher, which gave more the appearance of a lake than the present marshy aspect. Attempting the luxury of a bath on that first visit, I was soon driven back by the swarms of leeches. The lagoon is about four miles in circumference, and may

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some day be available to supply the town of Ballarat with water.

The weather was once more hot, and we suffered the common mishap of a resolute Englishman on Christmas, namely, to sit down to the time-honoured table fare of that day, under the auspices of a hot wind. Whatever the state of the weather, the goose and plum-pudding are methodically got ready, and we were not prevented, even by the weather, from doing them justice.

The next holiday-making occasion was that of the Races, which came on immediately after Christmas. This is a most absorbing spectacle in these Australian colonies — causing business to be all but suspended for the time. Such was the case here also, and the non-jumping clause was again enacted. We had struck work as regarded our commission labours, on Christmas day, but we ventured to disregard the profane call of the races, and our delegates also remained true to their duties. These races were held at an open space half-way to Creswick's Creek diggings, and about seven miles from Ballarat.

CRESWICK DIGGINGS.

Early on the morning of the 27th December, we started for Creswick's Creek. We enjoyed the cool morning air as we followed through an open forest the winding bush track. Some bare hills that rose up to the left when we were about half way, had the appear-

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ance, at a little distance, of being covered with Scotch heather—a pleasant deception to some of our party. But this was rudely dispelled when, on a nearer approach, we ascertained that the dark purple of the imaginary heather was only the effect of the charred grass after one of our numerous bush fires.

The township of Creswick had been only very recently before established; but we found already several hotels—wooden edifices, but of respectable dimensions, and well supplied, apparently, with custom. The great difficulty was to procure beds. The largest of the hotels was already full, but we succeeded in sheltering our heads under a smaller roof near it. We breakfasted at the former before leaving, and sat down with a considerable number at a long table presided over by the landlady, and supplied with the most substantial fare. The company had mostly the appearance of men of daily corporeal toil, with rough hands and weatherbeaten faces, but in some instances well-dressed; while in others the attire and aspects of mining were rather too conspicuous for the occasion in question, however honourable and suitable at their proper season.

The extent of the diggings here quite surprised us. The whole scene, for buzz and industry, was like a beehive—the attractions of races notwithstanding. There had been, shortly before, what is called a rush to this gold-field, in consequence of some reported great productiveness. These reports may be groundless, or they may have arisen from mere chance findings; but when such multitudes are drawn together,—when thousands are, in

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the vigour of a full faith, prospecting and digging all around, the aggregate amount of wealth developed is quite wonderful. A large trade springs up, and, there being no time to spend over substantial houses — which are, besides, rather dear luxuries in this quarter, — a city of tents makes its appearance, as with a magician's wand.

We now wandered through a long and winding street of canvass, where we found, in endless profusion, shops and stores, places of refreshment, places for amusement, blacksmiths, apothecaries, &c. Dr. So-and-So appeared on the green-baize door of some modest little square and white mansion. Immediately behind the tents were the diggers at work. The sinkings were generally from forty to seventy feet in depth. There seemed great competition for claims on this ground around the tents. From the close packing, we judged that most were strictly limited to the legal allowance of surface. The greater number were supposed to be earning a good subsistence. Great difficulty was experienced in preserving the lines of roads from encroachment, and in some instances, although the surface was left untouched, yet, by "driving" or undermining, the road had been spoiled by some parts of it falling in.

We observed that in tent-making there was a very extensive use of the cotton canvass produced in the United States. This material greatly recommends itself by the facility with which it can be sewed, and by its effectual exclusion of wet when it swells with the rain. Cotton canvass has in consequence been selling for a much higher price than the flax quality, although the

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latter is considerably dearer in Europe. There were already, however, many complaints of the fragile qualities of the cotton, which did not last so long or stand rough usage so well as the other.

Here the miners had comparatively few complaints. They were only newly on the ground, and were comparatively prosperous. Another cause of quiet, although rather an unusual one in society, was the small force of police that had as yet been spared to this rapidly increasing gold-field. A large police force here at that time involved a more vigorous collection of license fees, and a greater parade of authority; all tending to irritate the miners under the circumstances of the day. But on the other hand so small a force, while it had benumbed political agitation, had made crime quite rampant, and atrocities of one kind or another were almost daily occurring over the large area of these grounds.

The Creswick Theatre was open during the one night of our stay here, and we therefore paid it a visit. A long canvass erection close by the hotel was the institution in question. A band of music outside gave us a melodious announcement that all was ready. Admission to the best seats was 5*s.*, the second class, 2*s.* 6*d.* There was a tolerable attendance. Remembering that we were in Creswick, the acting ought not to have disappointed us. A star, it was said, was to be on the boards that night; but as we had some difficulty in making the discovery, we must refer it to what astronomers call the telescopic class—those of the sixth magnitude and under.

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CHAP. X.

MOUNT ALEXANDER AND CASTLEMAINE.

Spring Hill. — Forest Land. — Squatting Station on Mount Hepburn. — Plains of the Loddon. — Jim Crow Creek. — Aborigines' Protectorate Station. — Craters of extinct Volcanoes. — Forest Creek Gold-Diggings. — American and English Account of California. — Timber. — Church and Clergyman's Tent. — "Hotel" Charges at the Gold-Fields.

NEXT morning, after breakfasting at a board characterised chiefly by rude plenty, we found ourselves once more in our conveyances at 9 A.M. Getting accustomed to our seats, we became also sensibly reconciled to our carriages. The springs had been hitherto faithful, notwithstanding every trial of their integrity. The diggings expanded before us as we wound up the valleys, occasionally looking behind us over this novel scenery, where the stir and noise of industry now broke upon the senses.

Twenty minutes' driving brought us to an elevated part of the road, where we noticed a small party of diggers very busy over some shallow sinkings. There was already a report that these people were getting good returns of gold, as they were noticed to be parti-

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cularly early at work of a morning; taking breakfast, for example, at five o'clock, and getting promptly, afterwards, to their sinkings. A small party, like the present, when fortunate enough to fall upon a rich field, keep the matter to themselves; and, but that their assiduous industry betrays them, their manœuvring might be long successful. The disadvantages of a crowd are, that every one's area is immediately narrowed to the legal allowance; that life and property are endangered by the congregating of thieves and "rowdies," and that the payment of license money is much better looked after. The industrious little party before us, numbering about a score of persons, might look for a "rush" shortly, should they continue to excite suspicion by five o'clock breakfasts and other symptoms of good luck.

Spring Hill rose before us a mile or two distant, with considerable elevation, covered to the top with an open forest; and the yellow and sunburnt grass looking, in the distance, like ripe and waving crops — a very pleasant deception. Our road lay through hill and dale, somewhat uneven, and our vehicles, as they took the bush track along the hill sides, were often poised upon a very unsafe angle. The country hereabouts was not at all engaging, in an agricultural sense. The soil was of the poor quality usual where the quartz appeared through the surface; but in return it gave to the colonist, now full of faith in that material, the hope of a harvest of gold. Accordingly, every here and there was a prospecting pit, with its contents — usually yellow

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gravel — thrown out around it, giving all the appearance of so many small graves prepared for some calamitous visitation. As these holes are sunk anywhere and everywhere, by careless and migratory persons, they are often met with in very dangerous positions, alongside of the country roads. We looked now and then into these formidable traps, to ascertain that no drunken man or other property, alive or dead, had found its way to the bottom and been unable to reach the top again.

The tall stringy bark-tree variegated the forest land we were passing over, and indicated also the poor soil from which that particular tree usually springs. We had also the common red gum, and that graceful member of our Australian forests, the native cherry-tree. We passed a plain or extended valley, where a hurricane, some years before, had prostrated many of the trees; which now lay before us, or rather the remnants of their stems, in a half charcoal state, from the effects of the successive burnings of the grass. One admires the summary despatch with which nature works in this locality. The noble scion of the forest, once laid prostrate, is speedily swept away as a cumberer of the ground. Some dead bullock too, of whose vicinity our nostrils occasionally gave warning, would send us again into the same strain of philosophy. The portly animal, a week before, might have actively confronted us, girt in the commercial dignity, even if he had no other to boast of, associated with his "exchangeable value." But now, overtaken by the chapter of acci-

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dents, — bit by a snake, poisoned by some herb, or stuck fast in a bog, — he had crumbled into a mass of worms, that were busy removing all that was ugly and deleterious; this would be shortly followed by their own removal from this transitory scene, when they had performed their calling and left behind them only the white and inoffensive bones.

After an hour's drive the character of the soil very much improved. The country resembled an English meadow with its long grass converted into very dry and yellow hay. The comparison failed in the want of dressing and neatness around us, for as yet hereabouts the hand of nature had been the sole adorner, and the surface was scattered over with dead and half consumed timber. But these drawbacks affected only the near prospect: the distance was charming. This fine country had very properly been surveyed for sale, and we passed a number of marks on the trees which indicated the different lots that were set down in official catalogues of the proclaimed public land sales. In this picturesque country Mount Hepburn rose before us about eight miles to the northward, a few small trees variegating its surface, and covered to the summit with the yellow and dried-up grass; our imaginations, helped by a glimpse of the future of so promising a country, easily conjured its gold-coloured slopes into vast fields of grain ready for harvest.

About eleven we reached the homestead of this magnificent squatting station, for as yet this beautiful territory was devoted only to the use of sheep and

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cattle. The house, one of the best in the country, and quite an example in this way to the squatting community, was finely situated on a rising ground, which, without any inconvenience of elevation commanded a noble prospect towards the north. There were good stables and offices behind, and a considerable and well-stocked garden in front, where we observed an expansive furze hedge that proved attractive to the Scotch proportion of our number. Mine host was not at home, having left that morning for Creswick's Creek, and missed our party on the way; probably from his taking some short cut through the bush. Being eight in number, besides two servants, five horses, and two carriages, we felt some hesitation about intruding. Some of our party however, who declared to the imperative nature of squatting hospitality, took the responsibilities upon themselves. The ladies received us very kindly, and after some refreshment and an hour's rest we took the road once more.

The country continued open, fertile, and beautiful. Attaining a culminating point of the gentle undulations of the surface, we obtained a magnificent prospect to the north and west. The valleys and pastoral plains of the Loddon lay before us, the horizon terminating with the remote ranges of the Pyrenees. The dried-up grass had everywhere in the distance the pleasant appearance of harvest, except where some burning had taken place. Smoke seen in several places over the forest trees told us of these fires going on. The surface was exceedingly dry everywhere,

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and covered plentifully with its yellow and withered vegetation. The country was pleasingly variegated, the only thing wanting being the presence of man and the evidence of his industry and well-doing. We gazed over more than a thousand square miles of a fine and available country, without encountering even a sheep or bullock, or any vestiges of man and his works, to diversify the blank face of nature.

This circumstance of the rarity with which travellers passing through the pastoral portion of this colony encounter the live stock with which the country is now so tolerably well filled, has been often noticed. But with the large area required for pasture, and the gregarious character of the flocks and herds, the chances usually are for their being out of sight in some adjacent valley or bed of a creek, where they avail themselves of shelter from the sun, and a greater luxuriance of grass. During our entire journey, this day, of thirty-six miles, we saw but one flock of sheep, besides a few stray bullocks and horses.

We had now entered upon poor soil, whose surface was covered with fragments of quartz, and where occasionally we met with the evidences of gold prospecting, which we had not encountered since we entered upon the fine domains I have been describing. Here we again came upon more closely timbered land, with the stringy bark-tree, sending aloft his tall, straight, massive stem. We sought for the Jim Crow Creek, where we proposed calling a halt for a couple of hours; and as some of us began to get hungry, notwithstanding

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the heat of the weather, the prospect was, in proportion, additionally agreeable. This creek was about fourteen miles distant from Castlemaine, the capital township of the Mount Alexander gold-field. We had about an hour previously got a very distinct view of this golden mount. We now came upon the Jim Crow ranges, which seemed to be covered with the poor quartzy soil I have spoken of, and with a goodly proportion of the stringy bark.

As we descended into the hollow, we met a party of eight Chinamen, two of whom were engaged in driving a cart or waggon, containing their stores and digging implements. This was the third party of the same people we had met with during the day. In general, they were attired like Europeans, with blue serge shirts, and moleskin or other trowsers; but some few still retained the conical straw hats, and the wide knee-breeches or bags of blue calico, peculiar to their country.

The Jim Crow Creek really was running,—a feature pertaining to few of the minor streams at the end of December of a very dry summer. The sight of the limpid gurgling stream, with the adjacent hills, reminded us of Old England. Some proposed a bath in one of the pools, others went in search of something to eat. The latter party reported a refreshment tent about a quarter of a mile distant, where some mutton and potatoes were to be had, besides about half a bushel of oats for the horses. The tent-keeper, a Scotchman from Ayr, with his wife, had taken a refreshment

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license for one of the gold-fields, but had halted here for a few days, in consequence of his horse being stolen. He had either received permission, or taken it, to exercise his calling, for a short season, where he was.

Our purpose of bathing was interfered with, by learning that we were close to the old aborigines' protectorate station, where there were still a number of aboriginal children residing, under the care of a missionary or teacher appointed by the Government. We walked over to the establishment, which, at a quarter of a mile distance, appeared to us dwellers in tents, as a comparatively imposing object.

We found about twenty boys belonging to the station. These receive some education, and are trained to labour. A piece of garden ground is appended to the buildings, and a small lot of hay had been collected together, out of which we got an armful for our horses. In other respects the garden had run to waste. The children were about the ages of seven or eight up to sixteen or eighteen. The teacher remarked that the boys were sometimes restless at first, but that after they had stayed with him twelve months they showed no inclination to leave him. I could well believe it. He had the countenance of a philanthropist, and of one who bestowed far more care upon the dirty little creatures around him than most of us would be inclined for. The children seemed contented, but at the same time with that listless apathy which indicated a motiveless existence. We naturally reflected on the future prospects of these isolated creatures, whose kindred and

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tribes were rapidly disappearing from the world, leaving the survivors as an outcast remnant upon their native soil. We learned, however, that some who had been trained here had afterwards settled themselves in the neighbourhood; one in particular being alluded to, who had married a wife of his own people, built himself a hut a mile or two from the station, and lived somewhat like ourselves by his daily labour.

All these blacks belonged to what was called the Loddon tribe, which inhabited a great extent of country hereabouts. At the tent we met, on our return, with a man of this tribe who spoke English well. He informed us of many interesting particulars of his countrymen. He remembered when the first white man came into his part of the country, about seventeen or eighteen years ago. This white man, he said, was Mr. Mitchell, a squatter; to whom, as we understood him, he afterwards engaged himself as a servant. Although the colonists had been for about two years previously in the southern parts of the country, yet, as this man alleged, his tribe had never heard of their presence; a circumstance we may account for by the estranged and hostile feelings entertained by the different tribes towards each other, and the jealousy with which they regard the trespass of any stranger upon the territory over which from time immemorial they have been accustomed to roam. He was, at the time, a young boy of about eight years of age; and his tribe numbered, according to his estimate, more than 500 of all ages: they were now, he said, reduced to about

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sixty. He spoke of some great assemblage of black tribes that was shortly to take place in this vicinity, at which he expected 600 or 700 aborigines — the gatherings from far and wide. I recollect, myself, such a gathering that took place, about a mile north of Melbourne, in June or July, 1844, at which it was supposed there were 700 present, including many females. The dance of the corrobboree, which seemed to us onlookers the sole and not very intelligible or at least sufficient object of the meeting, commenced towards sunset, and continued most lustily, on the part of relieving companies of each tribe, till far on in the night.

This man's long association with white people had produced civilising influences such as are rarely met with among these rude aborigines. They can seldom indeed be induced, under any temptations the colonists can offer them, to abandon their wandering mode of life. In the present case, however, and in some few others that might be pointed out, the unsettled bent has been decidedly put down. This man confessed that, for a time, at first, he did not like either Europeans or European customs. He was married to an aboriginal wife, and had a hut or cottage of his own, not far off, where he cultivated and sold produce. We, therefore, supposed him to be the person alluded to by the teacher we had just visited.

The Jim Crow Hill, which we were now leaving, is one of the many craters of extinct volcanoes met with throughout this colony. The crater is a remarkably

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perfect one, and I regretted I had not time to examine it. I have, however, visited several others in the western part of the colony, where they are very numerous.

The weather began now to threaten rain, and we had not resumed our journey long ere we had some thunder and lightning. As night came on, after our safe arrival at the "Criterion Hotel," Castlemaine, the rain increased, and poured down in torrents almost unceasingly till morning. The diggers hereabouts, who had been long praying for water, had now their fill of it for a time. Forest Creek, which passes Castlemaine, had commenced running, and, although in but a tiny stream, this was to be considered a triumphant exploit for any shower occurring so late in summer. There was, however, a sad change in the aspect of its waters, since its banks for several miles in extent had been seized upon by ten thousand diggers, totally regardless of scenic beauties and the deluges of mud they poured into the bed of the creek.

Having visited this gold-field upwards of two years previously, I sallied out this morning with some feeling of interest to view the changes that had since come over it. These, indeed, I found quite wonderful. A township had been laid out, and the lands sold, and to a great extent built upon. The houses, to be sure, were not of that substantial character that one meets with in towns generally. A few were of brick or stone, but they were few indeed and far between. The great proportion were of wood, and chiefly the common hard woods of the country, for, hard and green as they were, they

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came into use as being so much cheaper than the Baltic, New Zealand, or American timber; which, greatly superior in quality, could not, however, be brought so far inland, except at an overbalancing expense of carriage. In many instances the houses filling up the streets were merely of canvass; not, however, so frequently in the form of a tent as of an ordinary house, the cloth being nailed outside a framework of battens. Canvass roofs were very common, and probably answered better than the rudely split shingles or paling procured in the neighbourhood. We noticed many wooden houses covered with canvass, and even one or two of brick did not disdain the light and airy association.

But notwithstanding the tinsel or temporary characteristics around us, here was wealth and commerce of a surprising extent, as indicated by the branches of several banks, many well-stored shops and warehouses, auctioneers' premises, numerous hotels and public-houses, and the general noise of human life. Outside the town was the strange spectacle of the diggings, the greater part of which in that immediate vicinity had been abandoned as ground "worked out," to use the digger's phrase; that is to say, ground which his rude method of individual labour could no longer work upon with profit, but which, as still containing much gold, might be re-wrought to advantage with better contrivances.

We took a drive in the afternoon along Forest Creek, where the diggings extend for upwards of four miles.

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The face of the country was remarkably changed since my last visit. Over the vast area of the gold-fields, that now expanded before us, there appeared but few diggers at work as compared with by-gone days. But the fleeting multitudes had not departed without leaving abundant traces of their visit. A great extent of the forest had been cut down, and the little twigs which shot forth with their fresh leaves from every stump, gave the appearance of a growth of evergreens, to the great relief and improvement of the view. There was a very passable road constructed through these diggings, and many persons with tents, stores, and licensed refreshment booths, still lingered upon the old ground for the business of the numerous wayfarers of this unsettled population. From this passing source, and from the few who still remained on the ground, the chances of custom for all these dealers appeared to us very slight.

But all diggings-traders are "waiters upon providence." They watch for those ever-recurring events called "rushes," which take place to or from particular places according to the rumours of good or bad luck. The rush lately had been to Simpson's Ranges and Creswick's Creek; and both Bendigo and this neighbourhood had, for the time, been serious sufferers by the movement. By and by, however, many would return disappointed; or, through the favourable rumours of some adjacent valley a fresh rush would be got up for Forest Creek; and the traders, ever on the alert to improve such occasions, would give them a helping hand by their own arts and dexterities.

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The diggings at this place were all of the shallow description, varying in depth from a few feet to twenty or thirty. The custom was to wash the bulk of the gravel or drift-beds in which the gold existed, and not to trust to uncertain leads or veins. Many places had been turned over and over three or four times successively by parties of diggers or single individuals, who, when unlucky elsewhere, returned to the old grounds with their inspiring recollections of the quantities of gold they were wont to find there in the earlier days. From these old diggings, when they were well supplied with water, an industrious man could rely upon getting something, although perhaps not a very tempting amount, by merely washing such parts of the auriferous gravel as still remained undisturbed between the different excavations. But in order to reach these remnants of the *terra firma*, he had to remove superincumbent accumulations, sometimes very large, of material already washed out. Thus one succeeding another upon these old diggings, not only reduced the quantity of the unwashed patches, but rendered them more and more inaccessible to the individual miner, with the rude appliances he usually brought to bear. Grounds of this kind must increase rapidly in the colony; and they are now a subject of public consideration with reference to copartnership companies and machinery, by which these lands may still be worked by skilful application when they have become useless to ruder modes.

The camp, situated upon a rising ground that commanded a considerable extent of the diggings, had a

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greatly improved aspect as compared with its appearance at my former visit. Instead of tents there were now several good houses, including that of the resident commissioner, who had a very neat brick cottage, surrounded by a garden. The gloomy lock-up was, in the old and accustomed style, built of the straight massive logs of the stringy bark tree, and looking very much more secure and formidable in appearance than in reality. A neat brick building, in the course of erection, that attracted our notice, proved to be the government hospital. Another hospital for the local public had also been established on the diggings; but it was carried on with some difficulty, owing to the indifference of the miners in assuring themselves of its aid in time of need by the payment of a small annual subscription. At the camp we received an invitation to a ball to be held at Castlemaine in a few days, but had to decline in consequence of other arrangements. A similar fate attended another invitation we were afterwards favoured with, to be present at a general congregating of the children of the various schools.

In our Commission's examination of witnesses we were amused by the evidence of an American as to the state of the Californian diggings, and comparing it, as we afterwards had occasion to do, with that of an Englishman on the same subject, given to us at Bendigo. The decided feeling in either patriot's mind as to the superiority of his own country and people rose uppermost in nearly every sentence. With the Yankee the great point of superiority lay in the ease with which

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his countrymen, in their gold-fields official arrangements, consulted human nature and avoided the conflict with human passions. He would have no hesitation, he said, in undertaking the collection of that obnoxious license fee which so perplexed the authorities. His plan was to bargain for the proceeds at a certain per centage, and under this arrangement to take upon himself the whole burden and expense of collection. If A or B was unlucky or ill-humoured to-day, he would try him again to-morrow. Should a dozen diggers in Murdering Flat or Shillelagh Gully prove uncommonly resolute and combined, yet the fact constantly before him that from each of these men he had to draw for his own share a dollar of agency commission, and that this dollar could not be touched unless they paid their license fee, would enable him to overcome all difficulties. Sticking like a burr to the delinquents, they would soon find they had no hope of escape and no advantage in giving trouble. In short, it was his business to manage human nature in this matter. He should acquire the best modes of doing so, and not one shilling would be lost.

In regard, also, to disputes among the miners regarding their "claims" or sections of auriferous land, he would leave them entirely to their own adjustment, instead of labouring, as our authorities did, with anxious and, as he thought, needless trouble, to devise some system of administration. Disputes, he said, were frequent in California, but as the contending parties never applied to the authorities, nor the authorities interfered

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with them, the cases were all, by some means or other, self-adjusted, and usually by help of the neighbours. He frankly admitted that when a case proved refractory as to this off-hand manner of adjustment, the dispute was settled by pistols. One, two, or five per cent of the cases might thus result; but at the cost of this minor calamity, ninety-five storms or upwards out of a hundred are allayed, without any public expense or inconvenience.

The Englishman's testimony of California was given in a very different spirit. He had been there for above two years, from 1849 to 1851, and had engaged in digging. He found the modes of mining for the gold very similar to those that now prevailed here. The Americans disliked all foreigners, and the English in particular, and "jumped" their claims with right good will whenever they were worth taking. Mobs of them, he said, would do this, and there was no redress. He himself noticed an attempt of this kind upon a party of French miners, who had beaten off their assailants. Persons from Sydney were particularly obnoxious, as the Australian convicts were supposed—and very erroneously, our friend thought—to have been the authors of many of the crimes that characterised California in the commencement of the gold-mining. The passengers by two vessels from that proscribed port had been refused permission to land, on the supposition that they might all have been convicts. As he himself "had been at Sydney," and made bold to confess so far, he was exposed to some danger; but as he had not other-

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wise interfered with American prejudices, he had managed to keep himself undisturbed. Alluding to the complaints we were then listening to from our Australian miners, regarding the police and other authorities being armed while collecting the diggers' license fee, he mentioned that such was also the custom in California; for he had himself been stopped on the highway by "a General Somebody," who was armed with revolvers and a bowie knife, and who, on hearing that an Englishman stood before him, "guessed" that he owed him twenty dollars for a foreign miner's license, and demanded immediate payment of the same.

He spoke of Lynch Law and the Vigilance Committee in no favourable strains. He had himself once been impressed into a jury under this system, to try a man for stabbing or murdering one of the natives of Spanish descent. When the jury assembled, seven or eight out of the twelve took out their pipes and tobacco, and observing the remainder, among whom was our informant, to assume a grave countenance, told them to do the talking in the matter while they enjoyed a smoke. The result of the "talk" showing a want of evidence, the prisoner was acquitted; but he had not escaped very far ere he was again seized by the mob, and brought back with a halter round his neck. How he eventually fared I do not recollect of our being informed. We had also accounts of ferocious duels, in one of which, witnessed by himself, two judges had been engaged, and one of these worshipful combatants killed. This witness expressed himself opposed to the prevailing agitation amongst our Austra-

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lian miners, and seemed to think they had only to visit California in order to feel content with anything, provided it was under British rule.

My commercial curiosity led me into various inquiries at Castlemaine, regarding the supplies of timber, that prime necessary of life and business, for house-building and many other purposes in new settlements. The first occupants of a gold-field, with a full impression of the uncertain and locomotive character of their vocation, naturally choose a very portable kind of mansion, that will not damage much by transposition, nor trouble them greatly in re-erection. Canvass is the material that combines these advantages, and this article accordingly is, in the earlier eras of gold-digging, the diggers great stand-by. But the discomforts of life under canvass, which may be readily guessed even without actual experience, and the facilities of "lifting" or slitting a tent, on the part of those who take any other entrance than that by the door, induce a preference for a stronger building material. Slab huts now begin to appear. They are a solid but rough-looking edifice, made of large slices split from the stringy bark tree, by way of a rude apology for planks. At last, in slow succession, comes the sawn timber, wending its long and weary way from the remote seaport, where it has been either imported from abroad, or sawn by machinery from the local timber. This supply marks an era of wealth and taste in the progress of the gold-fields; and the spirit of improvement is rapidly developed as the people become possessed of

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lands around the auriferous localities, and acquire notions of permanent settlement.

The demand for timber was on so great a scale that I was surprised to find very little disposition to erect saw-mills in the township. But after hearing of the expenses and difficulties, I was free to admit the balancings of the question. The carriage rate from Melbourne was, at this time, unprecedentedly low; some engagements having been taken at 4*l.* 10*s.* per ton by bullock drays, and 6*l.* for conveyance by horse-teams: which latter enjoy this considerable preference for their greater expedition. It was stated that, at these rates, even the Baltic timber could be brought to Castlemaine cheaper, measure for measure, than the inferior timber from the adjacent forests. Great expenses attended the local saw-mills. The supply of trees soon became scarce near town, and the best timber was, perhaps, originally at some distance off. I found that the split shingles, used for roofing houses here, were brought all the way from the Mount Macedon forests, at least thirty-five miles off. These wretched substitutes for slates, in size about fifteen inches by four, were sold at 8*l.* per thousand, the price in England for the finest and largest slates. I was not surprised, therefore, to see canvass still very generally used for house-roofing, as well as zinc, lead, and corrugated galvanised iron. I saw but one instance in which slates had been adventured on,—that of an establishment for a branch of one of the banks.

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Sunday opened upon us, a beautiful day, with the quietness customary even upon the gold-fields. Each of our company took the direction for his own particular church, and I steered for the tent of our Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Low, who had now been between two and three years located upon these gold-fields, and whom I had had the pleasure of meeting when I was here previously. I found my reverend friend and his wife occupying a rather commodious and comfortable tent; although the phrase "bad is the best" might well be applied to the whole genus of this description of mansion. This rustic dwelling was about twenty feet long, and nine or ten wide, terminated at one extremity by a chimney built of sods, above which was the usual top-finishing of an old herring- or flour-barrel. At one side of the door was a small round tent for containing the baggage.

These arrangements were an improvement upon the state of affairs at the time of my last visit. The worthy couple, at that time, although apparently not less contented, were not quite so comfortable. But improvement was not stopping even at this stage, for a brick cottage was now being constructed for them in the neighbourhood. A curtain screened off a small section of the tent, that served as kitchen, ante-room, and a dozen other purposes; and as we glanced through its half-drawn folds upon the lively little wood fire upon the hearth beyond, I really envied my hosts in this rural picture, and sympathised with Mrs. Low for the

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approaching pang of dismantling the happy scenery, and retreating within the cold and commonplace walls of brick and mortar.

The church was, like most others upon the gold-fields, a curious fabric of a very simple order. The sermon was a very good discourse upon the evils of a too eager pursuit after riches; very suitable for a gold-mining population. The benches on which we sat, did not boast of much carpentering. Branches of trees, two to three inches in diameter, were driven stake fashion into the ground, and a stout board nailed to their tops. The church-flooring was the primeval sod. A little pulpit covered with green baize, had a door of the same material, that opened and closed by a button instead of a latch. Above the minister's head, was a rent in the canvass, for ventilation, which he closed or dilated by means of a stick or other artifice. The place might have contained above one hundred and fifty. There was, on this occasion, a small attendance, but the congregation was very orderly. In returning from church, we met other congregations dispersing, and were pleased with the home aspects occasioned by seeing around us a number of persons, young and old, of both sexes, who were all in tidy trim, and holiday attire,—a state of things not witnessed upon gold-fields during the labouring days of the week.

We returned to the inn (whose name, the "Criterion," of American derivation, is now common here) to pay our reckoning, and start for the north that afternoon; our sittings the previous day having been

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protracted too far into the evening to permit of our then going on to Bendigo, where we were engaged for Monday morning. Our minds had been by degrees initiated into hotel charges at Australian gold-fields, but when our treasurer averaged our dinner at 16*s.* 1½*d.* each, wines not included, we groaned afresh; although the Government was paymaster. I have happily forgotten the wine charge. When we demurred at 7*s.* 6*d.* each for breakfast, mine host explained that each of the fresh eggs with which he abundantly supplied our table had cost him 10*d.* Nor had he spared us at dinner, and when we left Castlemaine the goodly town was minus a goose or two (save us the joke!), and other items of its trading capital.

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CHAP. XI.

BENDIGO DIGGINGS.

Want of Water. — Canals in California. — The Gold-Field. — "Sly Grog-Shops." — Bendigo Hotel. — Sandhurst Township. — A gathering of Clergymen. — Official Residences. — Quartz-Crushing. — Deep Sinking. — Castlemaine. — Complaints of the Miners. — Kyneton. — The Black Forest. — Gisborne. — Return to Melbourne.

THE distance to Bendigo was twenty-six miles, the road excellent, and we paced along briskly, passing an occasional toll-bar where the highway had been laid out and partially macadamised. In general we had but the bush track, unless at the approach to some crossing place. The country showed a quartzy poor soil for several miles out of Castlemaine. We then came to a soil derived from granite, large round masses of which everywhere protruded upon the surface. The country here improved very much in appearance, although, from the lightness of the soil, it looked, at this advanced season, much withered up. But I recollected its verdant beauties in passing along the same road more than two years before, during the more favouring month of October. The pretty vistas through the long gentle

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slope of open forest seemed to our fancies the future abodes of Australian nabobs and retired diggers.

But here, as almost everywhere in Australia, was the want of water, without which no scenery of extensive compass can be called complete. The dryness of the season had much reduced, or entirely evaporated, even the water-holes that bespeck the valleys and plains hereabouts. They are not of any great magnitude, no considerable river course having crossed our path. But although too tiny a feature to give character to scenery, they are anxiously recognised by the interior settler, who associates with them the success of his business and the support of life. The quantity of rain in Australia, one season with another, being quite sufficient for all useful purposes, if our supplies were but properly husbanded, we may look soon for the time when our rich diggers and other colonists will give attention to the damming up of creeks and valleys, and thus improve alike the scenery and resources of their country. In the midst of the hottest summer, a smart rain that has extended throughout the colony, produces an immediate and surprising effect in tempering the climate; an effect that disappears only with the gradual redesiccation of the surface. The multiplying of small sheets of permanent water over the country would partially communicate the same effect, and thus permanently temper the great inequalities of an Australian summer. The country is considered to be favourable in its physical features for these important operations.

While on this subject of the aids and advantages of

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water in gold-mining, I may advert to a great advance made in California by the construction of many lines of canals and ditches, which now introduce perennial streams where formerly the fitful supplies of passing showers were all that could be relied on. In that country, as in Victoria, there were large auriferous areas that could be worked only during the season of supplies from rains. During the dry season these tracts lay all but waste. In this colony the well known richness of such tracts has introduced the practice of excavating and accumulating the auriferous material during summer, to be in readiness for being washed with the winter's rains. This is for the present the true mode of meeting the difficulty; but it requires a store of means or capital that the miners as a body do not possess. It is, however, a mode likely to be adopted under the system of the small co-partneries that are now overspreading the gold-fields, one or more of the partners having the requisite capital. But, as regards effective working, no arrangements of this kind would bring results equal to those of a constant water supply to the whole body. The Governor of California, in his address to the State Legislature early in the present year (1855), alludes to 1200 miles of canals and ditches as already constructed in seven of the counties, besides further works of this sort proceeding in other parts. To such improvements it is to be attributed that California maintains, as she does, her present large production of gold, namely, about one million sterling in value per month.

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In California, as in this country, practical acuteness and unwearied prospecting seem to have been alike rewarded by the discovery of the richest spots at the outset, the production being maintained afterwards only by the diligent application of successive improvements in the mechanical appliances. With all such appliances, with increased water facilities, and with a great increase of population, California has been able to keep up the large production of the first years. Victoria is not yet so successful. The value of the gold of this colony exported during 1852, the second year of discovery, has been estimated at upwards of fourteen millions; a quantity surpassing that of California. But the export of 1853 fell to eleven and a half millions, and that of 1854 was short of nine millions. These successive reductions have taken place in the face of improved machinery and a very greatly increased body of miners. The question of a continuous decrease for the present year, or a rally in the production, is in fact the great commercial question of the colony. By the powerful aids of new appliances, by the new feature of quartz-crushing, and by the increasing numbers now at work, this question gives promise for 1855 of being solved on the better side — a result already showing itself as the usual season of rain supply draws on.*

We entered the Bendigo gold-field towards sunset,

* This promise has since been verified in an increase of the gold produce for the past two years, greater than even a sanguine mind might have ventured to expect. The yield of Victoria has reached apparently a point beyond that of California.

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and wound our way through an extensive area of old diggings, where every here and there were a few individuals or parties of miners who still clung to the old ground, on the assurance, doubtless, that in places where so much had been already got, something would be still left for them. The road was here well marked out, and in many places macadamised, and almost lined on either side by tents filled with flour and other stores, and by "places of refreshment," where ostensibly only ginger-beer or such like were sold, but which were commonly, in reality, so many "sly grog shops."

The sly grog system has been, on the gold-fields, as in other parts of the colony, a most irrepressible evil. For some time after the gold discoveries the authorities deemed it advisable to prohibit all sale of fermented and spirituous liquors within proclaimed gold districts. The effects were certainly good; for at a time when the colony was full of drunkenness, during the plethora and profusion caused for a season at first by the sudden inroad of wealth from the mines, the gold-fields were reputed the most sober, or rather the only sober places in Victoria. But the prevalence of the sly grog system, even in the face of the barbarous punishment of forthwith giving to the flames the tents and property of those convicted, led at last to the system of issuing licenses. There was a hope that the licensees might be found sufficient to supply the required quantities of the blue ruin and its sister compounds, and also aid the police in the suppression of sly grog rivalry. But the result has not

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answered this expectation. The office of an informer is not relished even under the stimulus of removing a rival. In other cases the sly grog shops seem to have been rather screened by the licensed houses, because they were profitable customers. The gold-fields have now lost their distinctive character of sobriety; but we were agreeably disappointed as regarded the outward signs at least, for excepting a few who were near public-houses, we did not meet with cases of intoxication. In this respect the whole colony has greatly improved since the riotously prosperous years of 1852—1854.

Our quarters, the Bendigo Hotel, consisted of a two-storied wooden mansion, with a considerable court-yard surrounded by stabling and other out-houses, and a great assortment of small bed-rooms;—so large a number, that we enjoyed the luxury of a room to each individual. As these pigeon-holes, however, had no space for a second bed, this luxury took the form also of a necessity. We were now in one of the streets of the new and rising township of Sandhurst, and a genuine, as well as novel, specimen of a gold-fields' township it proved to be. The site of the town was a portion of the old diggings which had been what is termed "worked out." In some parts the digging had been but partial, the yield of gold having probably been small; other parts had been much turned over; and the streets and allotments presented the odd spectacle of successive tree-stumps, pits, and mounds of earth,

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through which a devious pathway had been formed by the traffic of the young capital.

Sandhurst was supposed to contain, at this time, about 3000 inhabitants. Apart from the mining aspects of the case, the place had much of the features of young colonial towns generally. The houses were mostly of one story, and of wood; but I noticed some that were made of corrugated galvanised iron, and this substance was still more frequently the component of the roofing. There was just a sufficiency of scattered edifices to show the lines of the streets. Opposite to our hotel was a pretentious-looking edifice, which we were told was the Sandhurst Exhibition. Melbourne had not been behind as regarded this new and useful mania of the age; but we were not prepared for the enterprise of Sandhurst. Handbills at corners and upon gum-trees told us of a theatre, a circus, and even some third variety of the same sort. There were several hotels besides our own, one of which, towards the middle of the town, seemed a spacious edifice, and was further set off by a "Tattersall's" alongside of it. As most of the materials of this city in the wilderness had been brought here by a long overland carriage, the cost and value of the property before us was greatly more than its outward graces of appearance would indicate.

I set out to pay a visit to the Presbyterian Free Church clergyman, Mr. Nish, whose congregation met, for the present, in the Exhibition building alluded to. I had got a general direction to keep to the left, right, straight a-head, left again, and so forth, and set out

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well primed for the labyrinth. For a quarter of a mile, the rectangular lines of street divisions were tolerably maintained by the aid of occasional houses or tents, with intermediate fencing; but afterwards the tents, to which alone the variety of house structure was then restricted, seemed to have been scattered with more fanciful liberty. The place I was in search of was a canvas mansion, in the form of a verandah cottage of the very smallest dimensions. There was a little canvas door with a wooden frame, at which I tapped with becoming gentleness. The whole interior formed one little apartment, very nicely set out with a table and chairs, a sofa bed, and a small library. Several Protestant clergymen, of different religious persuasions, were collected round the table, on which were the inspiring tea materials, and my reverend friend at the head, ready to distribute the good things when he had acknowledged the Great Being who gave them.

We enjoyed a pleasant evening, the conversation turning chiefly upon the subject of education, and the great question in the colony, as to whether the support of Government should be given to general systems, or to that which allowed each sect to confine itself to the cognisance of the children of its own body. The first of these, the National, the other, the Denominational, are the rival systems that divide the colony, although not equally; for the latter seems, as regards both numbers and popularity, to maintain itself greatly a-head of the other.

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I admired the change and progress since my previous visit, more than two years before. The camp or residence of the authorities was upon a rising ground close to our hotel. This was formerly a square, composed mostly of little conical tents. The original square form was still maintained, but the tents had been supplanted by good substantial cottages. There was a large mess-room, which the numerous officers of the departments maintained, and where we had an excellent dinner and good wines,—a style that must have left a considerable impression upon the united salaries of the party. We inspected the various lions,—the gold-receiving room, guarded by several military; and the lock-up, constructed in the usual log-hut style. The accommodations for prisoners were most miserable, and their place was swarming with vermin.

We took a drive through this extensive gold-field one afternoon upon the conclusion, for the day, of our Commission labours. Our object was chiefly to inspect the various quartz-crushing apparatus. Auriferous quartz was hereabouts in the greatest abundance; and the officer in charge, who accompanied us, gave a glowing picture of the hidden wealth connected with this material. These statements, I may remark, have since been more than verified; and quartz-crushing, both at Bendigo and a dozen other places, has already attained the height of a mania. But we were totally disappointed at the non-efficiency of all the forms that came under our notice. Two points especially struck us; namely, the want of power in the machinery, and the inability to

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produce the necessary fineness in the grinding of the quartz.

We passed several places where the quartz was being quarried out, stacked up with firewood, and then burnt like lime in a kiln. By this burning the stone lost its flinty character, and was easily broken up. In passing these fires one felt a strong smell of arsenic—a substance said to be disengaged from the quartz in burning. Notwithstanding the poorness of the machinery, the excessive richness of the quartz still brought out a profit. The veins in some parts had yielded 50 to 70 ounces of gold to the ton weight. The miners hereabouts had many fine specimens of auriferous quartz, for which, however, they in general demanded absurd prices.

Whatever may be the future of quartz-crushing, the great gold-producing apparatus, at the time of our visit, seemed to be the puddling machine. The powers of this machine, however, are much restricted with a scanty supply of water. The large body who now owned these appliances looked anxiously to the heavens for the genial showers that now brought forth crops of mineral as well as vegetable produce. A general fall of rain in Victoria, which has thus such various and valuable interests depending upon it, may be reasonably estimated as worth one hundred thousand pounds. The Bendigo creek was already a mass of liquid mud; and as we thought of the washing out of all this accumulation with the winter's rains, we speculated on the rapidity of delta formations and other geological changes under an extensive system of gold-digging.

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Returning towards dusk after a long circuit, we were attracted by a solitary windlass that indicated a pit and a digging party. Our guide seemed to know both the plan and the object of the sinking, which he felt assured would be entirely unsuccessful, and only ruin those engaged in it. There were no other diggings in this place, for the practical sagacity of the miners had long since assured them that the ordinary conditions were not present. But notwithstanding all this, an undoubting faith in the results of deep sinking had stimulated the present party. Instead of ceasing, like others, when they reached "the rock" without finding any auriferous drifts, they persisted in penetrating this rock, a dark grey shale full of little cubical metallic crystals, and soft enough to be easily worked. This stratum seemed to be very thick; and as it was much inclined, the actual thickness was in proportion increased to the perpendicular excavations of the party. One hundred and fifty feet of depth had been already attained. Every one but themselves believed their labours to be hopeless. They, on the other hand, held up their spirits; because, as no one had yet gone through this rock, the predictions of failure rested on no authority recognised at the mines. It was only by blind adventure of this kind that the second bottoms at Ballarat, so fruitful in gold, had been met with. I have not heard the result; but learning of no third bottoms, or other extraordinary discovery lately at Bendigo, I conclude that the poor fellows, after eating up all their means, had been obliged to abandon their enterprise.

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After a stay of three days at Bendigo, we took our departure for Castlemaine, where we had still a day's duty to perform in the promised investigation of cases of complaint against the public officers. The long pent-up griefs and annoyances of the miners exhibited themselves in the various advertisements by the road-side; some calling for public meetings to prepare cases for the Commission, others inviting all to come forward with anything they had met with of a condemnatory character. One placard was entitled Tip, Tip, Tip; and went on to say that if any one had any particulars to give tending to convict any of the police or officers of this scandal, the committee of the miners would bring the matter before the Commission of Inquiry. We were, therefore, prepared for some dreadful disclosures on the morrow. At Castlemaine, however, as at Bendigo, these preparations all resulted in little or nothing. There was no refreshing case of tip after all. What we were chiefly assured of was that a system of irresponsible government answers very badly at the gold-fields, and probably everywhere else, with the British people. This was point the first in the demonstration. And to this I might add point the second, suggested by the large proportion of very young officers who had been appointed to the gold-fields; the point being to this effect, that when this irresponsible and unsuitable system nevertheless exists, it is important that the officers in chief authority should be men who, in exact reversal of Gibbon's description of the de-

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generate Roman officer, "had attained to the experience without the infirmities of years."

Our duties were now ended, so far at least as regarded our tour through the colony. We joyfully, therefore, projected a course straight through into Melbourne next day; for most of us had left business of importance that we carried on at that bustling locality, and were rather anxious to get back, in case our own concerns should be getting out of joint while we were endeavouring to re-adjust those of the public. Accordingly, with a beautiful morning, we bade adieu to Castlemaine.

We had started so early that we made Kyneton, twenty-two miles distant, to breakfast. This inland town, surrounded by a fine agricultural country, and upon the main road to extensive gold-fields, seemed destined to be a large and flourishing place. There were many good buildings here; and a bank and large hotel, both of brick, were in course of erection near the inn where we put up. The road was excellent, and in a commercial and social point of view was a delightful spectacle, resembling, as it did, a main artery of a huge system, pervading and vitalising the entire mass.

This figurative idea of a road was still more strikingly presented to our minds as we entered the celebrated locality of the Black Forest, a tract of about a dozen miles between Kyneton and Gisborne. This place, in the earlier days of gold-digging, and before the police had been properly organised to meet the new position of the colony, was distinguished for the gloomy antithesis of good bush-rangers and bad bush-roads. The

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smartness of the first and the softness of the last made a miserable conjunction. I must explain, however, that the Black Forest in question had none of those darkening and American backwoods' aspects that one naturally associates with such a name. It is, in most parts, of the usual open forest character so common to Australia, and gives of itself, and apart from police and bush-ranging associations, no dismal impressions to the traveller, unless, indeed, he may have ventured within its boundaries with a heavily-loaded dray, and during a wet season.

Now that the alarms of bush-ranging with reference to this part of the country have been quieted, the chief question bears upon the internal carriage department. The colonists were in dismay as they estimated the cost of the carriage of the necessaries of life to the two great gold-fields of Mount Alexander and Bendigo during about six months of the year, when the country is usually kept soft with supplies of rain. During the winter of 1852, the rate of carriage by bullock-drays to these places from Melbourne had advanced from 15*l.* or 20*l.* per ton, to upwards of 100*l.*; and as the formidable account for fifty thousand mouths was cast up, it seemed as though even a railway, to say nothing of a good macadamised road, might be constructed at the cost of a single winter's carriage expenses. A private company, therefore, patriotically took up the railway scheme, and the Government set about the road. The latter has been very creditably constructed, although necessarily at enormous cost,—

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something approaching even to the amount of a winter's carriage, for my impression is that it has cost about half a million sterling. The railway, on the other hand, depending on London capitalists, whom the Russian war has put out of joint for the present, has not, as yet, made any progress.

We entered the Black Forest, marching, not upon, but side by side with the noble highway alluded to; for so long as the weather was dry and the natural surface hard we all preferred the old bush tracks, uneven and circuitous as they were, to being the pioneers upon a newly-made macadamised road. After some miles we observed an unfinished portion — a place for a crisis to every vehicle during the coming winter, as we were assured the state of the official exchequer would not permit of this gap being completed for the present. Beyond this break we got upon the road at last where it had been beaten down; we made, therefore, a rapid exit from the Black Forest, and descended into the promising little town of Gisborne.

We were now about thirty miles from Melbourne. We rested for an hour under the shade of the trees upon a high ground to the south-east of the township, occupied as a police station. There was a river-course in the pretty vale beneath, but at present consisting only of occasional little ponds or water-holes. The road being now excellent we made good way, getting an occasional change of horses to help us through. As the dinner hour came on — always an early one with travellers in the hungry air of Australia — we scanned

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the merits of the wayside inns with some doubt and anxiety, and regretted that the old days of rural hospitality, that had at first characterised pastoral Australia, were at an end. A supply of spirits and beer may always be reckoned on at the country public-houses, and perhaps also wine of some kind, as the tap is the great source of profit to such establishments, and not the quiet passer-by who occupies a sitting-room and bed-room for twenty-four hours, puts all the house in the fidgets for that long interval of life, and yet gives occasion to the impatient landlady to charge only some 30*s.* or 40*s.* of a bill — an amount that, in ordinarily good times, such a personage would hardly take cognisance of. Regardingt hese country public-houses the "publican" (for this is now the colonial abbreviative) sets up the tap, and would willingly stop there: the other accommodations are the requirements of the bench of magistrates, and they are, therefore, as scanty as possible.

One large brick building, as we passed through a few houses that seemed the commencement of some township, attracted us; but we found it had just been completed, or nearly so, to be shut up. In no branch of trade had the present commercial depression of the colony shown its effects more than that of the publican. In the earlier days of gold-mining here, two years was enough to make a fortune at innkeeping. The bench of magistrates was besieged for licenses; and the worthy functionaries, alarmed at this unpromising social development, sought to suppress it by restricting the

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coveted privilege. But the monopoly thus occasioned seemed only to render the subject more attractive. Prices the most fabulous were given for leases and good-wills of public-houses in town and country. The reaction which overtook these times generally overtook also multitudes of these contending publicans, many of them provided with very large and costly establishments, at rentals proportioned to the late prospects, varying from five hundred pounds to as many thousands yearly. These large, and in many cases handsome, buildings, in a comparative sense, are now quite a feature in the colony, both in town and country; and with the present sobering influences of the times they will be found to furnish comfortable and comparatively economical hotel accommodation.

Disappointed, then, in this new edifice, we had to continue our journey till we came to another, but one of a far less promising aspect, where, nevertheless, we thought it advisable to alight, in case we might go further and fare worse; for we were not disposed to wait till we reached Keillor, some ten or fifteen miles further. This house was of the usual "weatherboard" construction of the old country public-house, with the tap door at a cut-away corner, and a side door for the quiet people like ourselves. There was a small parlour, not to be much excepted to; and off it a little bedroom, with three iron bedsteads, whose counterpanes and sheets showed marks of considerable service, and indicated also how scarce and valuable a commodity was water in Australia. It may be supposed, there-

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fore, that these beds in this state are in a condition of vitality that gives to the unaccustomed very little chance of a quiet night's rest. I have said that spirits are a sure supply of these houses; I should have added also tea. In Australia no house, public or private, is wanting in a supply of this great requisite. We secured our tea, but had some difficulty in making out the other customary items of a dinner. We reached Melbourne at sunset, considerably shaken with our roads and conveyances, after a journey of nearly eighty miles.

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CHAP. XII.

ANDERSON'S CREEK.

Heidelberg. — Templestowe. — Gold-digging on the Yarra. — The Earliest Gold-Field in Victoria.

THE earliest gold-field in the colony—that, namely, at Anderson's Creek—was still maintained by a small party of miners; and as it was very close to Melbourne, we considered our mission unfinished unless we paid this place the compliment of a visit. Four members of the Commission, therefore, started for those diggings on the morning of the 24th of February. The day was pleasant, with a gentle but cool north-westerly breeze. The sun, however, had considerable power for several hours after noon. We had a comfortable enough carriage, —a hackney, which had been hired for the day for 4*l.*, exclusive of horses and driver. The distance was about sixteen miles, nearly in an easterly direction up the river Yarra. We learned that with a pair of horses and a man the charge would have been 10*l.* to 12*l.* Considering the nature of the roads, in addition to colonial expenses, we did not think these rates very reprehensible. There is a considerable cab-stand now

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in Melbourne, with all varieties of vehicles, including some very stylish equipages; and competition and hard times are alike bringing the notions of their owners to reason.

The country was very dry, as little rain had fallen of late. The roads, therefore, were unpleasantly dusty, and the wheels threw up an occasional cloud into the midst of us, in passing over portions of road or street not yet macadamised. The main roads, however, are now for some distance from town remarkably well finished, with tolls upon each to raise a fund for keeping them in repair. Thus we passed smoothly along for four miles, crossing first the Merri Creek by its pretty new bridge, and then the Darabin by an older and much less pretentious structure. Proceeding on to Warringal, more commonly called Heidelberg, the road was not macadamised; but it was cut at the sides, raised in the middle, and with occasionally a slight attempt at levelling. On each side were indications of extended farming and house-building. We observed an indolent and unfarmer-like practice of keeping the trees still growing in the midst of ploughed fields. This is less the practice here now than it was several years ago, when the stumps of the felled timber raised their stiff heads amongst the waving crops. An East Lothian Scotch farmer who jealously circumscribes even the spreading wings of his thorn hedge, and narrows down his boundary footpath to a mere possibility of getting along, might have here found a living in cultivating waste corners and borders.

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We came upon the pretty village of Heidelberg by the road from the back, descending a rather steep hill, from whose summit we had a magnificent view to the eastward. Here we saw the gap between the high timbered ranges that permits the winding Yarra to flow westwards to Melbourne. The scene appeared one dense forest, excepting in our vicinity where we saw some natural glades less thickly wooded, or farms or green paddocks cleared of timber. Many small wooden houses had been added to the township within the last two years, along with a few brick and some ugly and oven-looking structures of zinc and iron. Here and there was a tent or a cottage-looking framework covered over with canvas. Some of the vacant town lots had been turned into cabbage gardens, and there were many fruit gardens, some of them large and abundantly stocked.

We halted at the Old England Hotel, a rural-looking establishment in the cottage style in the midst of a garden, and enjoyed ourselves over some grapes while getting a change of horses. We then crossed the Yarra in a punt. The river is narrow here, the breadth not exceeding twenty-five to thirty yards. As usual at this time of the year, it was comparatively low, but there was a considerable stream and a depth of eleven feet. The bed seemed full of snaggs, and it is too winding for effective navigation. Although by road Heidelberg was only eight miles from Melbourne, by water the distance was probably five times as much.

We passed through Templestowe, a village three

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miles eastward, where there was a public-house or hotel, a blacksmith, and a few houses and gardens, with fields in the neighbourhood. The soil was light, but apparently good for most purposes, although it had a sterile appearance with its withered grass after the late dry weather. As we approached the gold regions the soil became less favourable, as indicated by the stringy-bark forests it had sent up. Many of these trees were severely charred by recent fires. Their thick fibrous bark is very combustible; but the fire of these bush conflagrations seldom reaches the vital parts so as to destroy the tree. Often, however, the branches for a long way up the stem are burnt, and in their stead the charred trunk is covered with an issue of little bushes, contrasting their fresh verdure with the black groundwork from which they have sprung.

The country had now all the appearance of the auriferous districts we had before visited in the north and west of the colony. We did not notice either quartz or gravel, but were told the former was abundant near our road, and the latter we might guess would not be far from it. Three or four miles from Templestowe, we came upon one or two sinkings, but no one was there at work. A mile or so further brought us to a well turned-up valley, which seemed, however, to have been but recently before deserted. Following the descent of the valley, we saw the river Yarra pleasantly sparkling in the sunbeams as the waters wound their devious course through high and wooded banks. Bush fires seemed to have been re-

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cently raging along these banks, scorching the trees and burning off the grass, giving a very grim aspect to the landscape, notwithstanding the pleasing effect of a considerable stream of clear water. We found the digging population chiefly upon or near the river banks. They did not exceed 200 in all, and were scattered over about a mile of the river's length.

The search for gold here was on a different plan from any we had previously noticed. The trials in washing auriferous material taken from the sinkings in the valleys above, which we had just passed through and found deserted, had not answered. There was no water on the spot; and, after carrying the material to the Yarra, the production was so poor that this mode was abandoned. The miners then proceeded to the new and rather bold plan of getting to the bed of the Yarra itself at places where they had ascertained the bottom to be of the slaty rock that miners have, I think, recognised as the final bottom of the "auriferous series." This rock, a deposit considerably tilted off its original horizontal lie, is full of irregularities of surface, which, acting in the manner or with the effect of a miner's cradle upon a gigantic scale, intercept successively the particles of gold which the river has for ages been bringing down in its stream from auriferous reservoirs higher up. The plan was to secure a considerable slice of the river-bed by driving piles around the confiscated boundaries, and filling up the interval with the sand or soil from the bank. When this was accomplished, the

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diggers either commenced digging out this material to get to the river-bed, leaving an embankment between them and the water, or, if they had filled in only a sufficient embankment, they pumped out the water. We saw them busily scraping the surface and crevices of this slaty stratum with their trowels, and observed in a tin dish a little of the precious metal which one had just been washing out, along with a much larger proportion of some other metal, apparently iron pyrites. The rewards appeared poor. One party spoke of two ounces of gold a-week to four of them. But, as there was no commissioner here, there was no license to pay.

This encroachment upon the river had been undertaken on both sides at this place; and the waters, thus narrowed to less than one third their accustomed space, ran through the narrow gorge with somewhat of the appearance of a large and rapid mill-dam. Six or eight parties of miners were now at work, and others seemed every now and again to join on below and extend the length of the encroachment. The water oozed plentifully into the holes that were made in this artificial ground, and some one had to keep constantly baling out. This was a considerable labour of the morning; for over-night the hostile element had it all to itself, and long ere morning it had filled the cavity up to the river-level. These were most precarious holdings, for a rise of one foot in the level of the Yarra would sweep them all away. The diggers seemed quite aware of this prospect, and were making all haste accordingly, reckon-

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ing that after three weeks they must expect rains to an extent that would, at any rate, demolish their present constructions.

Hearing of a larger operation of this kind about a mile up the river, we walked along the banks till we arrived at the spot. Here we found that where a small narrow island divided the Yarra into two channels for about two hundred feet, it was proposed to dam up one of the channels and pump out all the water, and so get at the bottom with all its accumulated gold deposits. The dams had been already run out, and we observed two carpenters making a kind of mill-wheel, which they expected would be moved by the river sufficiently to keep a pump in constant operation.

The people seemed all very quiet. Only one case of disturbance had occurred, from a man robbing a tent of some few articles. Several stores seemed tolerably well supplied with necessaries and comforts. After this survey we proceeded, about one o'clock, and with a fair appetite, to squat down upon the grass for the enjoyment of our lunch. We could not refresh our eyes on the occasion with downy green grass, to temper, by the coolness beneath, the considerable warmth of the rays that poured upon us from above, and were but indifferently kept off us by the very scanty foliage of the trees. The scant and tufty bristles of withered grass did not gain upon our affections by the ants and other creeping things that plentifully meandered through the open intervals. Notwithstanding every drawback, we spread our white cloth on these aggravated deformities,

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and found ourselves surprisingly comfortable as we tumbled forth the contents of our portable larder.

After an hour or two's rest, during which some of the miners seemed rather curious to know who we were and what we came for,—a curiosity, however, which we did not satisfy,—we returned to town; arriving safely before dark, with no other accident than a broken pole to our carriage occasioned by one of the horses taking a determined fancy to lie down upon the road —a common trick amongst horses in the colony.

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CHAP. XIII.

SOCIAL FEATURES.

Varied Social Aspects of British Colonies.—British Aspect of Victoria.—Points of Difference in Home and Colonial Life.—Political and Social Tendencies.—Repressive Imperial System.—Public Meetings.—Colonial Elections.—Newspaper Press.—Colonial Literature.—Paucity of Female Population.—Crime.—State Grant for Religion.—Absence of Sectarian Prejudices.—Rival Educational Systems.—The "Prayer Question" in the Legislature.—Manners.—Gains and Losses.—Dress.—Hospitalities.—Government House.

WHAT kind of homes and society do our countrymen rear up for themselves in remote corners of the empire, and how far do they in these new scenes reproduce the old models of their native land? We start upon a varied inquiry, and will take hold of some chief features to illustrate the case of colonies like Victoria.

As our empire embraces all latitudes, and many various races, the social and general aspects are widely diversified. In many of the colonies, the tropical climate and a world of aboriginal population, amongst whom a mere handful of our own race are scattered, are permanent circumstances that entirely prohibit to such a scene the reproduction of the British aspect. In

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other settlements, again, the climate has the temperate character that accords with the vigour and industry of our people; and there, too, like the home picture, the social ranks are occupied throughout by one homogeneous nation, whose individuals and classes vie with each other in a common race of progress. Such is Victoria; and it enjoys this position in common with the Australasian group of which it forms so conspicuous a part.

A prosperous colony, like the one I describe, is of course more attractive to the influx of foreign population than societies of older settlement. Some of our colonies are in this respect a very mixed scene, from which it is difficult perhaps to derive a clear speculation upon the remote future as to the interests either of civilisation or religion. But as yet, in Victoria, the only foreign element, of any noticeable extent, is the considerable body of the Chinese, forming now about one-thirteenth of the population. The whole foreign proportion is probably not more than one-tenth. The aspect, therefore, is thoroughly British, both in the people and in their industrial vocations. Although, in the amenities of their climate, our Victorian colonists can sit in lively sunshine under vines and fig-trees, yet in the adjacent fields stand also the waving crops of the well-known cereals whose annual harvests recall to the willing memory the scenes of their early English homes.

The colonial amenities may be considered to extend beyond these climatic considerations; for while there is exhibited, as at home, the thick ranks of industrial life

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ever struggling for an upward movement in the social scale, the colony ever furnishes a far more inspiring field where success is the common rule and response to industry. In the religious features also the analogies are maintained. The last census gave scarcely one-fifth of Roman Catholic population, the remainder, excepting a small fraction, comprising various sects of Protestants. There is, according to the usual outward recognitions, a prevailing religious feeling, and a Protestant Christianity, but the one and the other are alike freed from those traditional inequalities and privileges that aggravate the natural harshness of sectarian differences.

We are not destined, however, to hold up in all walks and aspects the rude colonial candle to our mother country, and to matured societies such as she exhibits. And yet, the full powers and pre-eminent attainments of such societies are intimately connected with those striking inequalities that, by comparison in this particular phase, throw a happier light over colonial life. The colonial edifice is the more rude of the two, but it has the more abundant accommodations; while the elegant suites of the home palace shelter but a small portion of the surrounding crowd. To many minds, however, the bustle and the plenty of colonial life are but a poor substitute for the social refinements and literary attractions of European countries and the hourly association with the great events and destinies of the old world. From a country in a semi state of nature, the home-bound colonist returns to a scene thickly overspread with the highest attainments of art and industry. The pleasant carriage

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of a central English railway transports him through the endless varieties of a well-trimmed landscape that comes little short of one universal garden. The remainder of the social and domestic picture bears an equal polish to this, its exterior manifestation. The colonist whose means enable him to settle himself down in these trim scenes and occupy one of their picturesque villas, will find in such refinements a powerful attraction. But the application is limited in its range to those only who can afford to do so; for, although our returning emigrant may dispense with a mind that fully appreciates the flowery way, it is imperative that he have a purse adequate to pass him through its bristling turnpikes: and here, perhaps, is involved the sum of the case.

It is, therefore, very much in those particulars where the one country is strong that the other is weak. At home we are tantalised with delicacies and comforts that are within the reach of the few only. The colony is the land of the many, who find a ready access to its well stored shelves. The polish of the first is wanting to the second; but there is left for the ruder subject a broad hospitality that accords best with the general well-being, and satisfies the economic formula of the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Let us award to each its due, and pass on to more of the colonial features.

In two points, our colonies of a thoroughly British society, such as Victoria presents, differ from the home type. In the first place, there is no poor class in the colony, in the sense of the scanty means and precarious

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employment that affect half the population of the mother country. In fact, there is no poor class in any sense of the words; for, without being beholden to any one, any industrious individual is nearly as sure of his daily competence as if he drew it by the most undoubted of rights out of the British Treasury. From this feature arises an equality of consideration for all classes, and by consequence a political and social inclusiveness, that are quite irresistible in colonial society, although not always palatable to minds that are tenacious of the home stamp.

The second feature is the transference of a people to a new scene from a country bound up in traditions of the past; for by these binding roots of tradition are maintained social gradations and religious inequalities that could find no tolerance, upon the grounds of their own merits and suitability to the age and people, apart from the ancient armour in which they are enveloped. Accordingly, when our emigrating countrymen seek their new homes, these old associations are in great measure left behind them. They are thrown off like a loose mantle, and the disrobing process is rendered more prompt and effectual by the other feature already alluded to; namely, the equality of fact, as well as of opinion, in the new society.

In a scene of this kind, where every one has a stake in the common hedge, he feels a proportionate interest in public affairs. But men feel even more their religious than their political interests. The equality of religious privilege is the first watchword of the free emigrant

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throng. There is no semblance of a church establishment in Victoria, although the Church of England in the colonies may perhaps comprise the same proportion to the whole population that it does at home. An aid to religion is indeed given by the state, in continuance of a practice transferred from New South Wales, where it was instituted and took root prior to representative government. But this public aid, which is only in augmentation of certain private subscriptions, is given, in the proportion of their respective population, to all the Christian sects that will receive it: the Roman Catholic and the Unitarian come in, side by side, with the varieties of Protestantism.

But as some will not receive the aid, and as Jews and others are excluded, an inequality thus arises which has long been the object of animadversion; while to many minds there is an incongruity in the whole case of this aid which seems entirely unchristian. Pure voluntaryism threatens in the immediate back-ground, and the sound still rings unpleasantly in many unaccustomed ears. The colony has just entered on its self-government, and the ministerial proposition with reference to a change—for the question cannot remain as it now stands—is to expunge the word "Christian" from the statute, with the object of extending the aid to the Jews. The case has thus only additional incongruities, as we may well inquire whether the aid be intended not to promote, but to confuse, truth. It is not difficult, I think, to realise, within a brief future, a second change of the statute; and one that, in entirely withdrawing

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this bone of contention, will alike occasion a more perfect political equality, and exhibit in the colonists a larger measure of faith in their religion.

The political and social tendencies take a direction similarly democratic to the religious. They are, perhaps, less imperatively exhibited, and they have been more impeded from the first by the initiatory colonial governments imposed by imperial authority. Victoria is democratic in reference to what is suited to her own internal government. She need not on this account be less imperial; any more than some great municipality of the empire, with privileges of an enlarged character to suit its remote situation and to obviate the difficulty of others than itself conducting its own legislation. Victoria's democracy has been most conspicuous since the sudden accession of popular strength from the immigrating masses brought by the discovery of the gold. But it would be an error to infer that the colony was not democratic previously. The greatly increased importance arising from these events enabled the colony to surmount, with more than ordinary colonial promptitude, the antipopular restraints of the imperial system. This exemplifies the usual fate of our colonies in times past; which, by custom and prejudice of the parent state, have been held in bonds till they could be held no longer.

There is an evil in this repressive imperial system which needlessly prolongs unsuitable political institutions among the colonists. If the bad effects do not come prominently before home eyes, we may attribute that circumstance to the forbearance of our colonial

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countrymen. They rarely now think of exhibiting dissatisfaction in any other than constitutional forms; while, on the other hand, the remote imperial government has been proverbially apt to disregard so gentle an aspect of colonial discontent. To illustrate how needless, or rather how hurtful, has been this system of checking colonial development, I may remark that every concession to colonial freedom, and every withdrawal of imperial interference with local colonial affairs, has been attended by increased attachment to the parent state — by a resumption, in short, of those natural ties that had been only weakened by the curbs and precautions of imperial policy. A severance party, that was ever lifting its head in Victoria, was never effectually extinguished until the recent concession of complete self-government.

The great vehicle of progress in the colony, social, political, or religious, is the public meeting. This is a common stage, knowing no monopoly, where individuals of all ranks freely give views on public affairs. The operative classes in general take an active part at these assemblages, and they frequently display more of original and practical thinking than classes of higher training.

This interest taken by every one in public affairs, accompanied as it usually is by some intelligent comprehension of the general question at issue, has its own mode of outward development. The bribery and corruption and intimidation common at home, between wealthy candidates and needy constituencies, have comparatively little place on the colonial platform. The

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hardy sons of toil, as they array their opposing numbers on public questions, feel the stimulus in their well-drilled muscles, and are fain to make a labour question even of their political food. Our colonial election scenes are thus likely to savour rather of the American than the English character, unless the quietus of the ballot be effective. The principle has already been introduced into the colonial system, and has passed the colony through its first free elections with acknowledged success.

Where every one feels the interest to read, and has the means to buy a newspaper, the press is a flourishing institution. The institution in a general sense, however, is more flourishing than its component members; for newspaper property, in the individual meaning, is most precarious. The newspaper must take its colour from its customers. The rough social aspects of a colony are reflected in its press. The refined edge of a home newspaper article is here a style no better than the rounded back of the razor, which draws no blood and leaves the public transgressor unscathed. So at him again, and flay him, dead or alive. Personality has been the great fault of the colonial press everywhere. But improvement is already evident at Melbourne, and in Sydney the press has attained a literary status that may even satisfy the imperial standard.

The literature of the colony has as yet adventured upon little beyond those stirring subjects of the day that pertain to newspaper and other periodical reading. Of this, however, there is a most ample and varied supply.

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To the already crowded table of the colonial newsroom, the addition of yet another broad-sheet is an oft-repeated announcement. It tells of some rival "daily," emanating from an established and expanding township, or of a new creation in the auriferous wilderness, whose name and existence are, perhaps, unknown to many until they learn of both in the pages of its newspaper. Three large daily papers are published in Melbourne, besides many weekly and other publications. One of these daily prints, the "Argus," exhibits in its many and closely-printed advertising columns, an appearance that is, perhaps, inferior only to the great "Times" in the British newspaper-world. Geelong has a daily paper, as also the gold-fields' town of Beechworth; while the other important towns of Ballarat and Sandhurst have each two daily issues. Other places possess newspapers published at wider intervals. In all, there were upwards of forty such publications at the beginning of the present year.

The hard lines of colonial society are not improved by a prevalent feature in Victoria,—that is the paucity of female population. A young and remote colony—remote from the chief source of its inpouring population—is long exposed to this evil. The spirit of enterprise propels first the hardier sex; and only after long intervals is the family completed by the transference of its weaker members. Victoria, before the gold-fields, had been, in this respect, gradually equalising its social fortunes. Equality between the sexes had

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crept up beyond the age of fourteen; and on the total there was a proportion of two females to three males. But the male tide brought by the gold-fields has again increased the disproportion. There is now only one female to two males; and if we reflect that a large proportion of the former is still composed of those of tender age, the female influences are diminished in a yet greater ratio.

Our good old mother country, that displays so many excellences, shows in this particular a very different picture. She is reputed to be blessed with entire streets and villages of spinsters, but she values this property so lightly, that the more's the pity it can't go elsewhere. The young colonist, well to do in his new scene, with a heart heavy only in the absence of the domestic joys the other sex can give him, is a spectacle for their consideration. The arrival of an emigrant ship is still a signal for a rush to the seaport,—the wives for servants, and the youth for wives. It is hoped that the offers of the latter of these two classes of suitors will ever find a preference, notwithstanding the disappointment of the other class; for the disappointed mistress ought not to have forgotten that to the evil she so loudly bewails she herself is indebted for the husband and household that occasioned her journey to the emigrant depôt for her servant.

As each adventuring maiden is soon the centre of a domestic circle, many happy homes have been created in Victoria. The spectacle of thousands of children, all well fed and well clad, joyously sporting at the cottage

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doors, is one peculiarly pertaining to the colonial side of the social picture of our empire.

A comparison of the tables of the public expenditure will show, in the unusual sums for the administration of justice, that Victoria is a land of crime as well as of prosperity. That the criminal calendar is more than ordinarily lengthened is attributable to the two-fold circumstance that the convicts of Britain have flowed into the colonial society through Tasmania, and that there has been an excessive use of intoxicating drinks, caused either by the climate, the industrial vocations, or the ample means of the population. In all these respects the colony exhibited a lamentable picture for the first two years of the gold-fields. During that exciting period the colonial authorities deemed it advisable to prohibit to the gold-fields the privilege of selling intoxicating drinks, so that in spite of an irrepressible sly grog-selling, this compulsory sobriety gave for the time an enviable distinction to these rough abodes of industry.

The general unsettlement of these years was fearfully characterised by the prevalence of criminal outrage in the most aggravated forms. In all respects the change is now strikingly for the better. The public-house still marshals its band of the idle and dissolute, as I fear it will ever do with increased facility so long as the sale by retail of strong drinks is limited to these establishments. Still the streets and highways are infested with desperadoes; but good order triumphs at least over the general surface. There is a remarkable freedom from those ordinary crimes, such as house-breaking and petty

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larceny, that maintain a constant terror in our households at home. If this arises from the attraction of the higher prizes that often present themselves in a wealthy colony, Victoria is not, perhaps, a gainer by the comparison; but, however that may be, it is in itself an appreciable source of domestic comfort. While the cautious housewife at home regularly bolts and bars up every inlet to the mansion, the colonist is little anxious, and has little occasion for much of such precaution. Unless his establishment can offer something beyond ordinary house-furnishing, it will not tempt the ambitious taste and higher aims of the colonial burglar.

I have alluded to the political aspect of the religious bodies of the colony. The system is voluntaryism, modified by a state grant annually of 50,000*l.*, in terms of the celebrated fifty-third clause of the new Constitution Act under which Victoria is now governed—a clause that already promises to be a grand battle-ground in the colony. The clause provides that the money is to be given for "the advancement of the Christian religion," —one half for ministers' stipends, and the remainder for erection of churches. The aid is to be apportioned to the different Christian sects according to their numbers by the preceding census. This aid is accepted by the great majority of the congregations entitled to receive it, but there seems an increasing disposition to do away with it, and, by a mutual denial, to stand all on the same footing. Which side of the question will prevail has not yet appeared. The first free legislature shows for the present a majority favourable to its continuance.

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It is not now, and perhaps never will be, that the Protestant and the Catholic will forget, even in the ordinary affairs of life, the undying antagonism of their respective creeds. Nevertheless, with reference not only to these but to all other religious diversities, there exists in the colony, much more than at home, a liberality of feeling and a freedom from prejudice that is a pleasing trait among citizens of a common nationality. To dream of excluding a Jew from the colonial parliament would be as foreign to the law as to the public sentiment. On the same principle of a national feeling, it is a pleasant feature of the colony that Irishmen have taken a prominent part in the affairs of its government, this prominence not being confined to the Protestant proportion, but, as regards political liberality and public usefulness, having hitherto been most conspicuous in the Roman-Catholic. One is tempted to hope that the day may arrive when Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, the young and the old, may meet on the same terms, at the same schools, and in the same legislature, and for the same objects and duties of their common country; and that, while to effect this they have mutually dismissed sectarian animosity, they are not necessarily to be involved in religious indifference.

But our theories on some of these subjects, if they are not inconsistent with human nature, are at least much too fast for it. The state of the education question brings us back for a season to the time-honoured manifestations of our humanity. The great educational contest in the colony as regards public schools, or

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schools to which the state gives aid, is between the denominational system, which separates and distinguishes the religious sects for the sake of unrestricted religious teaching, and the national system, which seeks to amalgamate at least the Christian proportion of the children, by restricting the use of Scripture to certain selections previously approved of by the representatives of each religious persuasion.

Until within the last five years the subject of education attracted little attention in the colony as a public question, and, as was natural under these circumstances, it lapsed chiefly into the denominational form. The formation of a local government by the separation of Victoria from New South Wales called forth attention to the national system, which had hitherto languished under a feeble emanation from the central establishment at Sydney. The two systems have since carried on a competing existence under two separate Boards, which urge their rival claims for the aid of the State. The national has made progress, but its antagonist is still strongest in its first hold upon the people. The influence and successful exertions of the different clergy in the establishment of denominational schools, is one of those commendable features that we nevertheless weigh in a dubious balance with the other aspects of the picture. They present to us the rising generation training under the very genius of sectarian discord, and under the secluded system in question, imbibing, as with their daily food, the religious animosities that are to embitter and divide the future.

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The intentions of Government with reference to the education question seem for the present confined to the proposition of amalgamating the two rival Boards, and aiding generally the cause of education under either system, or any other that may commend itself, when instituted and carried on in the various districts by the respective residents. This plan both avoids coercion of the people's views and promotes discussion and the reconsideration of opinions. As regards the strong hold that particular views of this subject take upon the mind, it is one nearly allied to the religious question, and proportionately demands the tender dealing that is given to cases of conscience. The views of the State in a society like that of Victoria should be national in the largest sense, and for these views the colony is a field comparatively unincumbered by the traditional division walls of home society. The State, for secular purposes, presides over a people who are of various religious views, but all, nevertheless, of equal civil status. In such circumstances the Government cannot be a religious administration in the sense of professing any particular creed or pertaining to any distinctive sect. No money of the State granted for educational purposes therefore should be expended for purposes religious; and for the rest of the difficult question, the Government must, in a national spirit, do the utmost for the whole people committed to its charge.

Another entanglement arising out of the similar association of religion with ordinary life in its collective aspect, is the "Prayer Question" in the Houses of Le-

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gislation. The association of religion with individual life is so appropriate to man, that from the mere force of analogies his mind is apt to individualise the collective forms of society, and to expect an harmonious result from that religious aspect of human nature which all experience teaches to be proverbially and incurably discordant. It was a sublime idea of the philosopher to summon the miscellaneous assemblage of his fellow-men to the duty of first acknowledging a supreme overruling Power ere they entered upon their public duties to one another; and when every head arose erect to the call, there was rendered perhaps the noblest tribute that a feeble humanity could yield to its Omnipotent Creator. Whether or not so simple a procedure, which left the option as well as the words of the prayer to each individual of the diversified assembly, might have passed the jealous ordeal of religious feeling on the part of the anti-prayer party on this occasion, could not be ascertained, seeing that the opposition required the recitation of a formal prayer framed by a committee and given from the chair.

The subject rolled into the Legislature with the explosive qualities of a bomb-shell. The Assembly rejected the proposition by the narrow majority of two; but in the Council it was adopted by the casting vote of the president. The form of prayer brought up by the committee of this body, however, was rejected by a majority of two. The prayer consisted of a short form of supplication, concluding with the Lord's Prayer. On reconsideration by "call of the House," the latter alone

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was received, and passed finally by a majority of two. Thus as regards the two houses, the prayer party and the no-prayer party equally enjoy their triumph and bemoan their defeat; but it is less evident how such proceedings accord with a spirit of mutual charity, how they can tend to edification, or how such an issue of contentions and accidents should be deemed a prayer of the House or be thought acceptable to God.

The utilitarian leaven seems unfavourable to the arts of well-bred life. As social intercourse has not the exclusiveness so neither has it the polish of home. Distinguishing manners are here less closely allied to prominent public usefulness. The tradesman or mechanic who commands a position in the Colonial Legislature must needs have free entrance to the colonial drawing-room, although not calculated to shine in such a scene, as he tries his balance upon the razor edge of its unaccustomed proprieties. One would prefer to see the utility and the elegance in combination. No help for it, however, that those well-mannered youths who dance to such perfection, those collegians who read Greek and speak Latin, will yet study far less of the land they live in than of other subjects comparatively unimportant. They are not destined therefore to lead the way here; and indeed if the country and its progress depended on them, I fear there would be but a brief story to tell about either.

A colony is not commonly a place for saving money. People make it by heaps and spend it or lose it with a like facility. Lightly come, lightly go. The credit

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system in business, which is nearly universal, scatters freely the means and resources of progress through the community. The mass moves on briskly, but many a blow falls upon individual members. This is just the state of things to encourage a liberality, both in business and in private life, that shares alike the charm of generosity and the fault of profusion, and endangers the safety both of one's own property and that which others entrust to colonial agency. In this state of things, the mercantile and trading world, where the operations of individuals ever tend to run ahead of their capital and resources, is characterised by many chequered scenes of gains and losses. There is, as compared with the steadier course of home industry, a large amount of commercial insolvency; but at the same time, as the unfortunate of to-day is often the successful of to-morrow, so it is a pleasant feature that the deficiencies of the past are frequently made good from this subsequent success.

Victoria, since the diggings' days, is a place of much faster and more fashionable life than was plain pastoral Victoria prior to these times. The labours of the rough diggers have caused a wonderful change in this respect. There is, in a full measure, the disposition to social intercourse and gaiety that is common to a joyous climate and a population not deficient in the means of furnishing and maintaining its social adornments. The tall and rather slight figure of the colonial youth, under the genial atmosphere of Australia, and unincumbered by the heavy clothing of a higher latitude, has a tendency to the graceful. In regard to attire, the stronger

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sex exhibit the customary utilitarian plainness of a commercial people; but the ladies, on a Melbourne promenade, or in a Victorian drawing-room, are attired with an elegance and costliness that would scarcely be looked for in the miscellaneous gathering of so young a society. After the turmoil of the first years of the gold, the colony is assuming the appearance of a settled community, and exhibiting a considerable breadth of educational and polite attainments.

The hospitalities are to excess in the home form; or should we not describe it, that they exceed the measure even of the home fault? Those huge evening gatherings for eating and drinking, music and dancing, if they escape doing harm, what have they accomplished for good to society beyond a benefit to the confectioner and the wine merchant? Is the conspicuous object of our social gatherings to be ever the dinner or the supper table?

Government House has a grand influence on fashionable life. The style on the Toorak Road makes husbands and fathers balance their ledgers with increased care and anxiety. The Governor of the colony occupies the position of the head of society in a degree far more commanding than that of head of the Government. He may thus have a great influence for good in the manners and habits of the people.

I have alluded to our English system of festivities and social intercourse,—so injurious, inconvenient, and expensive. But the coarse extravagance, in this particular, of John Bull's social system will not be likely

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to receive any check from Government House example, unless there be a different arrangement with respect to the Governor's salary,—an arrangement that distinguishes the proportion paid for public entertainments, and allows of that proportion being dealt with as a separate public fund. The Governor would thus find a twofold advantage: he would appear to receive a comparatively small salary for his own expenditure, while, perhaps, in reality it was more to him, under the new arrangement, than the nominally large sum now enjoyed; and next, if he have any disposition to improve social intercourse in the way alluded to, he will not, in the disinterested distribution of a public fund, be exposed to personal imputations.

A preceding Governor acquired, under the present system, unpleasant experience in what was probably an initiatory effort in the right direction. Sir Charles Hotham celebrated the royal birthday by a ball to a thousand guests, and an elegant and somewhat costly supper. But in the supply of wines he had omitted champagne from the viceregal festivities, and the unpardonable offence consigned him to immortality in the columns of the local Punch. And yet much more decided steps than this must be taken to effect an adequate reform; but it is to be feared there will never be courage for them as the case now stands. Let us trust, however, that no discreet Governor will commit the inspiring beverage just named to the free disposal of the miscellaneous gathering of a birthday ball. We are reminded of the visit of a party of our countrymen after the late

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revolution at Paris, where, at the hospitable board of the authorities, the English capacity for champagne was the feature of the entertainment. Although the scandal that all had got drunk was met by John Bull's indignant reply that not more than half of them were so, yet it would be well to avoid the risk of even a still smaller scale of such improprieties at the public festivities of loyal Victoria.

Already in England the continental modes begin to appear, in the frequency of *conversaziones*, conducted without the old and vulgar attractions of the table. England has still to imitate the reasonable evening hours of her continental neighbours; but Victoria is behind either example. The alarm of the colonial young ladies at a commencement of the dance after tea, and a break-up long before midnight, may be mitigated by a more frequent repetition of this abbreviated enjoyment, and even a greater sum total of polka at the year's end than was attained under the old dispensation. In a bright glance through Victoria's future, one asks when the invitation card for an evening's festivities will exhibit the rational programme for a drawing-room of tea at seven, coffee at eight, carriages at half-past ten; the interval an exercise of the brains, rather than the jaws, and mine host and all his guests in bed and asleep at a time that the old fashionable world deemed only just the beginning of the evening's business.

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CHAP. XIV.

VICTORIAN POLITICS, FINANCES, AND LEGISLATION.

Self-government conceded to the Australian Colonies. — Effect of the new Constitution in Victoria. — The democratic Principle is colonial Conservatism. — Loyalty of the Assembly to the Crown. — Process of Transition to free Self-government. — Proclamation of the new Constitution of Victoria. — A colonial *Coup d'Etat*. — Opposition to the Proceedings of the Governor. — Adoption of Vote by Ballot. — Writs issued for a new Parliament. — Marvels of Victorian Finances. — The new Constitution, its Merits and Defects. — Elections for the new Parliament of 1856-7. — Popular Views. — Speech of General M'Arthur, the acting Governor. — Questions for Consideration. — Aspect of the new Assembly. — Measures of Government. — Remarks on the Future. — Federal Australia. — Second Chamber of Legislation. — Land Question. — Immigration. — Railway Policy. — Prison Discipline. — Transportation Question. — Colonisation of Northern Australia.

THE importance so rapidly acquired of late years by the Australian colonies, chiefly through the effects of the discovery of gold, has materially aided political development and the advent of that much-desired self-government which has been recently conferred upon them. A co-operative aid, not less pleasing to these colonies, has been the good disposition of the parent government latterly towards these aspirations of the colonists for liberty. In this respect the policy of the last few years has been in striking contrast with that

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of a long preceding era. And it is a contrast no less edifying than striking; for our good old mother, after a lengthened and cross-grained lesson, begins to learn that her colonial children are in best heart only after they have attained this cherished self-government, and that their anxieties and strivings on the subject have arisen from the fact of their being her own genuine offspring.

The first important step towards the free self-government, since the gold discoveries, was conceded by the short-lived Conservative administration of 1852, which acceded to the view urged by the two gold-producing colonies, New South Wales and Victoria, that the regulations and revenues connected with the novel and extensive vocation of gold-digging should be under control of the representatives of the people, instead of pertaining to the crown, as was contended by the local authorities. The succeeding Liberal government at home completed the remaining steps, and the "new constitution," which had been in the first instance debated and agreed to in the Colonial Legislatures, received in 1855 the imperial ratification. Thus the opposing home parties agreed in meeting the views of the colonies.

The new constitution effected a great political change in Victoria, by introducing a system of government in imitation of that which prevails at home. A legislature wholly elective was substituted for one elective to the extent of two-thirds only, the remaining third consisting of crown nominees, or persons selected by the Colonial Governor, amongst whom were included the officers of His Excellency's executive government. Under this

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preceding system the Governor was the real executive authority; whereas, by that which succeeded it, he, as representative of the crown, retained only the restrictive or nominal headship that we recognise in a "constitutional" government. Henceforward the majority of the legislature was to indicate, in its own effectual although indirect method, the persons and principles of the practical executive, as distinguished from its formal head.

The imitation of the old on the part of the new country results in a somewhat hazy likeness. Traditional England, with her prestige of ancient orders and transmitted inequalities, cannot be reproduced in the rude and utilitarian colonial soil. The democratic principle is colonial conservatism. Victoria has two houses of legislation, but, in adjusting herself to her circumstances, she has made them both elective. A restricted constituency, in which the hesitating old legislature took refuge in its initiatory attempts at constitution-making, is an erroneous principle in a prosperous colony; and it is already being corrected in the first session and amongst the first proceedings of the new legislature.

But if there is not a good imitation of the imperial system, there is at least a free use of the imperial terms. The Premier and the Parliament of Victoria are rising into current phrases. Brown, Jones, and Robinson, Esquires, M. P., have their titles secured by official designation, and the additional distinction of "honourable" oppresses the novitiatory elements of the Victorian senate. The Assembly, which from the greater breadth

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of constituency is likely to have the most of public consideration and to comprise the colonial talent, exhibits "the Ministry," with its ministerial and opposition benches. Both are equally loyal to the empire, now that the imperial policy is one of non-interference in the local concernments; but, after preceding colonial models, they are likely to take a free scope in their antipathies to and animadversions upon each other.

The process of transition to this free self-government from the preceding system has been an interesting feature of these Australian colonies. It is, indeed, a process still going on. The old and accustomed hands are yielding up the reins to a new management. The people will occupy eagerly and resolutely the vacated seat. Their cause has its preliminary difficulties, which, in the absence of experience and political unanimity, may be discomfited once and again at the outset. But faith in the cause can never be wanting, and the successive popular Governments that are henceforth to rule in Victoria may in the main look for the accord of the public, while they enjoy the stimulus of grave and imperative responsibilities. I write this concluding chapter after receiving in this country one month's later news since the time of my leaving Melbourne, and already there is under the new system a "change of Ministry." This is a great colonial event, for it is the final completion of the people's accession to the government of their own affairs. The previous administration was so far popular, in that its members had all stood the test of election by various constituencies.

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Approved so far by this test they all reappeared upon the new political horizon, but, as they had comprised the Government Executive under the old system, the new development could scarcely be considered complete without this final and generally-expected change.

The introduction of the new system of government was differently managed in each colony; and the subject gave rise to an amusing variety of opinion, expressed both within and without the legislative walls, as to the exact time when the New Constitution "took effect." The question, to which in Victoria those speculatively inclined had attached practical issues connected with the Estimates, was, whether this effect was immediate upon the official proclamation, or not until the assembling of the new Parliament, or through any *coup d'état* intermediately. But however this knotty or crotchetty point might be adjusted, the Council then in being, with its one-third of nominees, remained, as was by law provided, for some time after the proclamation of the new order of things, and until the writs were issued for the election of the new Parliament. I shall make a few remarks on the transition movements, and upon present and prospective legislation and government for the colony.

The New Constitution was proclaimed by the Governor, the late Sir C. Hotham, in the Legislative Chamber, on the 23rd November, 1855. His Excellency's address, which was of a congratulatory character, alluded to the advent of increased constitutional liberty, and of an improved state of the colonial finances.

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The subsequent procedure on the part of the Executive Administration occasioned an animated and rather sharp discussion in the House. It appeared that the chief officers of the Government had felt themselves placed anomalously, with reference to the framing of the Estimates. The personal views of the Governor were, that they should defer submitting any Estimates until the assembling of the Colonial Parliament under the New Constitution, and that in the meantime there should be the responsibility undertaken of expending the sums requisite to carry on the Government. The difficulty on this point felt by "the Ministry," as in a spirit of anticipation they might be called, was as to whether they were to regard the Estimates as their own, or, as in the old style, the Estimates of the Governor, which, as on former occasions, they were dutifully bound to carry out. If they were to be responsible to the Legislature for these Estimates, were they still on a proper footing under their old appointments? Legal opinion was had recourse to in this emergency, and the plan agreed upon was, that the chief officers should resign or be "released." This form was accordingly gone through; and very shortly afterwards the *late* Colonial Secretary was "sent for" by the Governor, invited to accept office, and to form a ministry. He did both; and the old officers having severally, mutually, and generally, satisfied themselves as to their own and their brethren's political views, they reappeared upon the stage in their new relationship; the Chief Secretary, as the head was now called, accepting office

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from the Governor, and the other officers, namely, the Attorney-General, the Collector of Customs, and the Surveyor-General, accepting office from the Secretary.

As it seemed desirable that some appreciable interval should divide the beginning from the ending of this little piece of bye-play, the official benches of the legislative hall were vacant of their chief personages throughout the day of the *coup d'état.* The Government side of the House ventured at first merely a simple intimation that the persons in question had resigned office. But this unexpected announcement causing much astonishment and some angry remarks from the opposition benches, further explanations were made to the effect that a necessity had arisen which caused the absence, but that the official personages would reappear the following day. These intimations did not prevent a strong feeling of dissatisfaction; and a motion was put, and promptly passed, requesting the fullest information as to this resignation or dismissal of the officers.

Both the information and the officers made their appearance on the following day, together with a memorandum of the Governor's views as to his own position with reference to the future Government. His Excellency held, that although the Ministry were accountable to the House, they were also so to him as representing the Queen, Parliament, and People of the Empire. He required, therefore, that all measures to be brought forward on the part of the new popular Government should first have his cognisance and sanc-

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tion. He was still more plain of speech, in further remarking that he was not disposed to sanction the appointment to office of persons whose sole merit consisted in their holding certain political views. These arbitrary notions and infelicitous expressions of Her Majesty's representative erected the ears of the popular members; for such language could be interpreted only as a proscription of their leaders, and an ominous defiance of their future majorities. The Council, taken somewhat by surprise at the complicated consideration before them, carried a motion deferring any further debating on the case for several days.

The debate was duly resumed, having for its subject a proposed vote of censure upon the Ministry, for their leaping with premature ambition into their so-called responsibility, and their taking office under so autocratic and unconstitutional a minute of the Governor.

Official explanations were now abundantly offered. It was stated generally, that the course which had been taken was one laid down on due consideration and under legal advice. With regard to the Governor's minute, although it had been rather negligently dealt with, so as to give the appearance of its having been submitted to, yet it was not by any means an ultimatum on the part of his Excellency, but merely an outline of his private views to be laid before his Executive Council for consideration.

The opposition, however, was not disposed to feel satisfied. The amendments of friendly intermediation

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were negatived, and the resolution of censure insisted on. But it was lost by the ominous quantity of one vote, the numbers in a full House having been twenty-eight for and twenty-nine against the censure; and the reader must bear in mind that the constitution of the House was still on the old principle of one-third proportion of Crown nominees.

The Ministry still survived, and the House continued its labours over a variety of subjects. Already by anticipation the stimulus of self-government seemed to be felt in the country, and the political arena expanding before the Legislature, that body seemed instinctively unwilling to terminate its existence by bringing its business to a close in such an interesting prospect. One decided step in opposition to the Government was taken at this time by the House, and with more success than the one just alluded to. This was the adoption of the ballot. This important question was brought forward on the 18th December. The Ministry had decided that this should not be made an open question, and they declared their opposition to it. They stated that the changes which this principle, if carried, would make in an Electoral Act they were then carrying through the House, were too important to permit the indifference of an open question. Having the support of several of the popular body in opposition to the ballot, they had probably counted on defeating the motion. But several of the non-official nominees voted in the opposition. The motion, after two debates, was carried

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by a majority of thirty-three to twenty-five, and the next day the Ministry intimated their resignation.

The colony was already gliding into self-government before the Legislature of the new constitution had been summoned into being. The mover of the ballot motion, Mr. W. Nicholson, was "sent for" by the Governor, and actually undertook, although he did not carry out, the formation of a government. There seemed little disposition on the part of the popular members to disturb the present administration until the old state of things had entirely passed away; and Mr. Nicholson was probably not very urgent in his ministerial mission, as he had previously made arrangements to return to England. The resignations were therefore recalled, and the Ministry were not again disturbed in their tenantcy of the official benches. After a protracted session the business was concluded, and the writs issued for the new Parliament, which was appointed to assemble on the 21st of November, 1856.

FINANCES.

In Victoria, as in older states, the condition and administration of the finances are ever the main question; and notwithstanding the ardour in the more abstract political subjects, it is probable that colonial administrations will be made and upset much more upon the first than the last consideration. The New Constitution is launched upon Victoria under the auspices of a sound financial condition. The circumstance, that the case

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had been the reverse with Victoria's finances only a short while previously, has a public interest, inasmuch as it shows how easily such vigorous young communities can surmount the effects of extravagance or mismanagement. We may readily suspect that the liberties assumed by colonial financiers have mainly their origin in this very elasticity of the colony, whose depressed fortunes in one year are hardly made public, ere in the next we find that the tide has turned, and they are again in the ascendant. Let us take a brief survey of these marvels of Victorian finances.

The year 1854 was a kind of culminating point, after the excitement and speculation that had been instigated by the gold discoveries between two and three years previously. As that year drew on apace, the public finances of golden Victoria began to present a gloomy aspect. The general upward movement in everything colonial, caused by the rapid adjustment of the colony to its enlarged scale of wealth and commerce, had made every one prosperous; but it had also made every one sanguine and speculative, beyond even Victoria's prospects. So Government and people alike stepped on beyond bounds.

The years 1852 and 1853, which immediately succeeded the gold discovery, presented a public treasury overflowing with receipts, far surmounting the most sanguine estimates, or the most liberal provisions of public expenditure. The total revenue for 1851 had been 380,000*l.*; and a basis of expenditure on little more than that amount had been taken for the succeeding

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year. But when the busy and eventful 1852 had rolled past, the revenue was found to have reached no less than 1,577,000*l.*

And now approached a real difficulty, although seldom regarded in that light. It would seem, in our rare experience of the feature, that nothing so unsettles a Government as a large and unexpected surplus revenue. This paradoxical position, like the flowering of the aloe, is illustrated but once in an age; and with both the similitudes there is created a condition that is as evanescent as it is rare. The unwonted burden of riches was, in this instance at least, promptly got rid of. Executive and Legislature alike fell to work, in order to scatter the encumbering accumulations of the treasury. A scale of expenditure was adopted, applicable not merely to the receipts of the day, but to an anticipated increase and continued profusion of the future.

The waves of commerce are subject to gravitation laws of their own, like waves of a more common kind. They pass on, and leave a hollow behind. Just so did it occur in this case. The sudden and large influx of gold had reared an immense wave, which rolled after its own fashion over the colony, and was followed by a depression, which for the years 1854 and 1855, as regarded the public finances, exactly reversed the lively picture of the preceding years.

The account presented in 1854 by the new Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, to the alarmed Legislature and the dismayed public, showed an estimated deficiency of receipts, as compared with the expenditure going on, of

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1,085,000*l.* Nor was the abyss yet sounded even here. This statement having been gone into towards the end of 1854, the ways and means for the year 1855 had also been estimated. Here was another and a still more alarming deficit. One want had begotten a second, and so on; and the different towns and districts of the colony, rivalling each other in their incessant importunities for expenditure and improvements, had only too successfully wrought upon the Government. In the department of Public Works alone, there had been promised or projected for the latter year the almost incredible sum of 1,861,000*l.* But, independently altogether of this amount, and supposing its expenditure could have been entirely avoided, there was still a deficiency of 975,000*l.* The reader must recollect that all this array of figures, sufficient, perhaps, for the creditable exposition of some European state, pertained to a settlement not yet twenty years in existence, and containing a population not exceeding 300,000 souls.

In order to meet this emergency, besides deferring or abandoning certain of the public works, the Governor proposed to increase the tariff charges on imported goods, and to borrow an unused surplus of the "appropriated moiety" of the land fund destined by parliamentary disposition to be applied towards the encouragement of emigration from the mother country, and amounting at this time to the large sum of 865,829*l.* In explanation of this surplus, I may remark that, in consequence of the extensive voluntary emigration caused by the gold discovery, this fund had of late accumulated much

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faster, with the greatly increased proceeds of land sales, than opportunity or necessity admitted of its being expended. But, in truth, the fund had been already taken and spent in another way, and the still further wants of the empty exchequer — for that large amount had been insufficient — were provided for by loans from several of the local banks, whose large capitals, and still larger deposits, gave them a command of means sufficient to assist even these Victorian deficiencies.

The Governor had arrived in the colony in the midst of its crisis, and had soon many cares on his hands, into all of which he entered with characteristic warmth. The question of remedial measures he pursued both by personal study of the complex subject, and by the appointment of royal commissions to enquire into and report upon the state of the finances and other public departments. In the present case, he dealt with engagements entered into and undertakings commenced prior to his own assumption of responsibility; and he intimated that the large estimates he had ordered or authorized to be submitted to the Legislature, had been rendered necessary by these preceding operations.

But re-action and economy were now the order of the day. The dissatisfaction everywhere expressed induced the Colonial Secretary, who had the credit at least of a great deal of the wrong doing, to resign his office. How far he was guilty, under what might be called the esoteric arrangements of the old irresponsible system, is perhaps as difficult as it is now unimportant to ascertain. He was succeeded by Mr. Haines, who re-

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mained until the late change under the new system, to which I have already alluded. The Council refused to entertain the proposal of additional taxation, and referred the executive to the curative process of reducing the current expenditure to the level of the current income. The Council, through its principal opposition member, Mr. O'Shanassy, had estimated the revenue for 1855 at 2,400,000*l.*, inclusive of one-half of the land revenue, but exclusive of the other half appropriated for emigration, both together being estimated, for the year in question, at 800,000*l.*

The new secretary, with the guiding injunctions and estimates before him, proceeded to prune down his predecessor's budget. The original estimates for 1855 amounted to 4,101,293*l.* After a two months' pondering over his difficulties, Mr. Haines had succeeded in a reduction to 3,308,716*l.* But as the House continued inexorable, this half-way ground was of necessity abandoned; and the final estimate at length appeared, amounting to 2,388,816*l.* This amount did not include the "contingencies" that might arise in the course of the year. But after this vigorous procedure of retrenchment, the prosperity and progress of the colony soon supplied an amount of revenue that not only overtook, but surpassed every claim that subsequently came against it.

The Council condemned the procedure of the Executive in laying hands on the accumulation of the emigration money, whose tempting accessibility, it is to be feared, had furnished the chief stimulus to the extrava-

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gance that swallowed it. A motion was passed ordering the repayment of the whole sum, and that in future the appropriated moiety be remitted to the Emigration Commissioners, in accordance with the provision by Act of Parliament.

The carrying out of this self-denying ordinance might have afforded a rare trial to the colony's fidelity to engagements. Towards the end of the same year, however, came the proclamation of the New Constitution, which transferred all colonial affairs and revenues to the control of the local Legislature, and we have heard no more of the emigration fund balance. But the case, so far as it goes, forms a pleasant illustration of those views of colonial policy that I have already touched upon; for we here find that it was the imperial administration in the colony that contravened the imperial interests, and that these interests were taken up and defended, not as might be naturally supposed by the imperial party in opposition to the people, but by the popular opposition itself, in some of its last contendings with the expiring imperial system in Victoria.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

The New Constitution, as regarded its provisions, was not, by any means, a subject of unanimity with the public. While the Governor proclaimed the very measure that the Legislature had agreed to eighteen months previously, the colonists were actively discussing its defects at their public meetings, and were generally

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agreed that a prompt reformation in various material parts was essentially necessary. This apparent instability of opinion is, however, explained, when we consider several concurrent circumstances: 1. The Legislature that framed the Constitution Act was under the old arrangement of one-third proportion of Crown nominees. 2. The electoral distribution was extremely unequal as regarded the representation of the public feeling; the excess of political power having been given to the Crown tenants on the squatting lands, and to other thinly-peopled country districts, so as to neutralise the democratic tendency of the larger proportion of the public in the towns and the denser settlements. When imperial concessions were given to these colonies, the respective local governments were commissioned to carry them out: that is to say, they were entrusted to circumscribe their own powers; and of course they did this after their own fashion, by such electoral arrangements as might still, if possible, retain all the old dominancy and principles in the public administration. 3. The Constitution details were argued and agreed to during the very height of the gold excitement, and some of its provisions bear eminently the stamp of that temporary elatement of the colony. What are we to think of a young colony limiting the selection for its Senate to men possessed of not less than five thousand pounds of real estate, to be chosen by voters having one thousand pounds of the same material, or an income from it of one hundred pounds a year?

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To afford to the reader some further insight into the defects, and the merits too, of Victoria's new constitution, I here transcribe an article from the Sydney press, comparing the constitutions of the two colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, and written shortly prior to the assembling of the Parliament of either colony. The article is from the able and liberal paper, "The Empire."

"THE CONSTITUTIONS OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND VICTORIA.

"When our Parliament assembles, the New Constitution is likely to become the habitual topic of debate; and it will probably be a convenience to our readers to have its provisions revived in their memory. We propose to do so by comparing it with the Constitution of Victoria, and, in its points of departure and discrepancy at least, with the Constitution of England. As our intention is merely to make a useful *précis* for record and reference, we will not pause at present to consider the various vexed questions which the inquiry will necessarily suggest.

"There are substantial differences in the mere instrumental parts of the two Constitutions, and a more substantial difference in their spirit and tendency. Let us first examine the former. It will be seen that the defects do not belong exclusively to one colony; both have committed sins against popular liberty which need to be repaired; and we may add that each has made

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concessions to it which the other might imitate with advantage. And they have sometimes concurred, with a surprising unanimity, in identical blemishes which it will need a skilful and vigorous hand to remove.

"Here the Upper House is nominated by the Governor and Executive Council; in Victoria it is elected, but elected by the propertied and professional classes exclusively. A voter must be a member of the learned professions, or owner of a freehold estate worth a hundred a-year, or of a leasehold estate of the same value, held on a lease of not less than five years. And in either case he must have resided a year in Victoria before registration.

"Here, no property qualification is required in a member of the Upper House; in Victoria, he must be the *bonâ fide* owner of a freehold estate worth five thousand pounds, or five hundred a-year. Here, any British subject of twenty-one years of age, or any alien naturalised by Act of the Legislature, is competent; in Victoria he must be at least thirty years of age, and, as in England, an alien is wholly inadmissible.

"Here, there is a provision that only one-fifth of the Upper House shall hold office under the Crown (a very formidable number to leave directly open to ministerial influence); in Victoria it is still worse, for there no limitation whatever is provided.

"Here, the President is nominated by the Governor (that is to say, by the Ministry); in Victoria, in accordance with the electoral principle which prevails, he is chosen by a vote of the House, from its own body.

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"With us, the number of Legislative Councillors, Senators, or *quasi* Peers, is twenty-one, but liable to be increased by the Minister of the day; in Victoria, the number is thirty, and not liable to be increased. In Victoria, judges and clergymen are excluded; here, there is no such restriction with regard to the Upper House.

"This House cannot be dissolved in either colony, except of course by a change in the Constitution. With us it lasts in the first instance for five years; and then if we do not alter it into an elective Senate, the members will hold their seats for life. In Victoria, six members go out every second year, and thus the entire House is renewed once in ten years.

"In the structure of the Lower House, there is no material difference. With us, the number of members is fifty-four; in Victoria, it is sixty; too large a number, it is thought by some, for the population, and complaints are already common that ninety fit candidates (for the two Houses) cannot be obtained.

"The qualification of electors is nearly identical in both countries, with the exception of lodgers paying ten pounds a year, or boarders paying forty, who are enfranchised here, but not in Victoria.

"In the higher elements of the Constitution we find some notable differences and unexpected agreements.

"In Victoria, there is no two-thirds clause: but an absolute majority of the whole number of members in both Houses (not simply a majority of those present as

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in ordinary cases) is required to effect any alteration in the Constitution.

"With us, all persons holding offices under the Crown (except ten offices which are specified) are incapable of being elected to the Lower House, and any member accepting office is thereby unseated. There is no disqualification of this nature in Victoria—a perilous omission.

"Here, pensions equivalent to their full salaries are given to the present office-holders on their removal on political grounds; in Victoria, an official must have served ten years to become entitled to three-fourths of his present salary; two-thirds are granted for any shorter period of service; and as no one in that colony has been ten years in office, the latter pensions alone will be paid. We must note, however, that the salaries are somewhat larger there than in this country.

"In Victoria, all offices under the Crown are in the nomination of the Governor with the advice of the Executive Council; here, it is provided, that minor offices may be left at the disposal of heads of departments, according to the usage in England.

"On the other hand, our neighbours have introduced an English provision which we have omitted. Persons accepting the chief responsible, or parliamentary offices for the future, shall, on their removal on political grounds, become entitled to receive a retiring allowance commensurate to the period of their service on the scale adopted in similar cases in England. It terminates, however, on their return to office. The sum granted

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for this purpose is four thousand a year; and the alleged object of it is to secure the best intellects to the public service, by making it a less utterly hazardous profession. In England it was adopted to prevent the great offices of State being necessarily reserved for the wealthy; and Lord John Russell, Mr. Goulburn till his death, Mr. Macaulay, Sir James Graham, and other English statesmen, have found it a considerable element of their income; Mr. Disraeli and his friends were too short a time in office, we believe, to become entitled to it. There is no provision of this nature in our Constitution.

"In the oath of allegiance a change was made in Victoria, after debate and division, which we cannot but applaud. Our representatives are obliged to swear, before taking their seats, that this colony 'is dependent on, and belonging to the United Kingdom.' This clause was expunged by our democratic neighbours as inconsistent with the independence of their Legislature, and with the rights guaranteed by their Constitution."

After the middle of the year 1856, the note of preparation began to sound for the new elections that were to usher in the new Parliament of Victoria. The old legislative body had shortly before brought its lingering session to a close, and it was now being adjourned from time to time, until, by the issue of the writs for the new Legislature, it ceased by law to exist. This event came on; and now, the last of the old things passed away. The colonists at this transitionary era, were busy with public

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meetings, and the rigorous testing of candidates. Melbourne was the great political hotbed of the colony, and usually gave the key-note to all leading questions. The views adopted at the "mass meetings" were decidedly, and with an unusual degree of unanimity, of a democratic character; that is to say, the disposition was to make common cause as to political and civil rights with all classes and creeds of the people comprising the resident citizens. Hence, the popular programme comprised manhood suffrage, together with an equal electoral system, in place of the present inequalities; which, as was jocularly adverted to, regarded far more the political privileges of sheep and cattle, grass and gum trees, volumes of the atmosphere and areas of space, than the industrious colonists who gave these things their use and consideration. The discordance of the religious aspect under the state-aid system, could not be got rid of without the entire withdrawal of the aid, which left all sects on the common ground of trusting to themselves and the merits of their respective systems. This was a subject less certain than the two preceding; but the view here given of the case appeared to gain the day in the popular gatherings. To the same effect might we remark of the education question, which it seemed desirable should, as far as practicable, be dealt with in a national spirit—in a spirit on the part of the Government that would regard all the citizens as standing on the same common ground, and entitled to the same privileges, aids and encouragement. The system of the ballot was already law, and appeared to

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be willingly acquiesced in by all parties, including even those who had, prior to its introduction, been the most opposed to it. These formed the political section of the popular views, which were urged by some as abstract principles, like our American friends' motto, that all men are by nature born free and equal; while others restricted the responsibility of their opinions to the particular case before them. In the background of the political scenery came the material wants of the colony, the cause of progress, telegraphs, railways, roads, postal communications, public works and general improvements; which, if they occupied the second column of the programme, had the advantage of carrying even a greater unanimity than was accorded to the first.

The colonial Parliament emerged from this cloud of discussion. A striking feature, was the return by popular constituencies of every individual of the old administration; who therefore reappeared on the new platform, occupying side by side the well known benches on the right of the Speaker's chair, and continued the administration of the Government. Nor had these gentlemen passed the ordeal of mere small and remote constituencies. The Attorney-General had faced democratic Melbourne itself, and occupied a high position on the poll. The Premier took the considerable constituency of the county of Grant, while the treasurer crept in even through the radical doorway of Geelong. We are to explain all this, by the entire absence of anything like reactionary political fanaticism on the part of the colonists. The temperateness with which they viewed

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their affairs was more satisfactory in the retrospect than probably it was found at the moment by the more ardent popular politicians. The prosperous state of the finances aided the quietive effect, and the respectable personal status of the members of the Government brought also its due consideration. But the stimulus of the times had penetrated even this ministry of the old school, whose new colours bore a far greater accordance to the popular hues than the old flag, now apparently buried and oblivioned by every one with right good will. The new Parliament met as appointed on the 21st November, and the royal speech which came off on the 25th showed, in the scope and variety of its subject, how our ministers, comparatively quiescent under the old system, could be dragged into life and business under the stimulus of the new.

Major-General M'Arthur, the commander of the forces, had for the time assumed the reins after the death of Sir C. Hotham, who about a year previously had sunk under constitutional infirmity, aggravated by the harassments of an over-anxious mind in his political duties. Sir Charles was a distinguished naval officer, rising to eminence in his own profession, and his appointment to unaccustomed duties of civil government furnishes one more illustration (perhaps, at length, the last one) of the old rule of repressing by military or naval discipline the imaginary turbulence of colonists; who must of necessity have, in the home eyes, some latent hostility to their fatherland, their kindred and fellow-countrymen. The gallant general, who officiated as acting Governor until the arrival of a

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successor, was entirely indisposed to offer any interference between the colonists and their new self-government; and in consequence, he enjoyed a reign as undisturbed as the nature of human things will ever permit.

The Ministry gave their "speech" in great measure through the Governor, who intimated all the points of their proposed policy. This was certainly a mistake, as a precedent. We can scarcely anticipate that future governors will always so far accord in their own personal feelings with their ministries as to be disposed thus to father their political and general views. But there is a still greater discordance when the same governor has occasion, soon after having delivered one speech, to exhibit certain opposite principles in another, arising from the advent of a new administration.

The speech commences by allusion to the happy removal of previous apathy in public affairs — a phraseology that we may suppose was meant to convey approval of the preceding agitations about reform and progress, without the strain of doing so in a direct manner. It was admitted that the circumstances under which the new constitution was framed might render many reforms necessary, but that it was not desirable during that first season to enter upon abstract politics. The franchise, however, was to be equalised, and, after the returns of the census about to be taken were before the country, the electoral distribution would be re-adjusted.

One subject of popular interest was the regulations

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affecting the admission into and the subsequent advancement of the officers of the civil service. With the progress of the colony the civil staff had assumed the dimensions of a moderate legion. A commission had already inquired into this subject, having before it the results of a similar inquiry shortly previous in England. In Victoria there was now to be a competitive examination, conducted by an independent Board, and, instead of promotion being restricted to the particular department of each claimant, the whole service was to be open to the merits of every case. These new arrangements, particularly with reference to the Board, had a twofold object; for, besides an equitable and encouraging system in the nomination and promotion of officers, they had reference to a stability of the staff of the various departments as distinguished from the probable frequent changes of the political heads. It was not desirable that changes in the latter should be the cause of changes in the former.

Partly in connection with these views were some changes in the important financial duties of the audit officer, whose range of business was enlarged; while the Auditor-General was detached from political relations, and thus rendered independent of the executive. The audit-office had been the subject of animadversion during several previous years. The tide of business that came with the gold-fields having overloaded the office under its old system, great inconvenience resulted to those who had dealings with the Government, and a new plan was for the time adopted: this was the "imprest"

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system, which came into operation early in the year 1853, with the view of avoiding delays in payments to contractors and others from the treasury. Under this mode, sums were handed from the treasury to certain officers of departments, who were to make prompt payments and subsequently to render accounts. Thus the sum for a month's accounts was advanced with the view of a settlement within the month. But a confusing balance of arrears and shortcomings soon appeared, arising both from press of business and from errors or omission of forms. The finance commission appointed in July, 1854, by Sir C. Hotham, reporting a year afterwards, recommended the abolition of this system, and the New Constitution Government were now announcing the new audit system.

The old system with the public lands was to continue. The issue of the Crown grant to the purchaser was to be more prompt. The contentious question of mining for gold on private property had been considered: facilities for such mining were to be granted, but still with inviolate rights to the freeholder; but the precise mode in this difficult adjustment was not noticed. The Orders in Council, the subject of so many contentions, were to be rescinded, and an interest granted to the squatter, renewable until the land was sold, but subject to an acreable rent. He was also to be paid the value of his improvements when the progress of the colony called for his retreat. The whole of this important subject shortly came on for discussion and settlement in the new Legislature, and had already passed the

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Assembly with some amendments on the official plan, the principal of which were that the squatter was restricted to a yearly right of occupation, which was valid as against other squatters, but not against the land sales, and that the whole public lands department was to be consigned to a Board of Management.

On the subject of railways, it was intimated that the best main lines had been ascertained, and that when Parliament gave authority the works would be preceded with. On the subsequent discussion of the Estimates, it appeared that the large sum of about half a million sterling had already been expended, or pledged, in prosecution of these works without legislative sanction to that effect. This circumstance caused a motion for a vote of censure, which, however, was lost by a small majority; as the feeling both of the Legislature and public was strongly in favour of the progress of the works, notwithstanding the manifest impropriety of the Executive neglecting, what it might easily have procured, the constitutional sanction in question.

The next question referred to public-houses, on which it was proposed to make a great reduction of annual license rate. The license had been previously raised to 100*l.*, with the view of "keeping the houses respectable;" but this species of monopoly did not seem to work satisfactorily; and a section of the public was already advocating the plan of abolishing all restrictions on the liquor trade, excepting as to regulations of uniform application, as the only mode of dealing with the evils of the public-house system—short at

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least of actual suppression. Colonial distillation, previously prohibited on revenue considerations, was now to be permitted. A measure was afterwards accordingly introduced, which made the rate of duty the same as upon all imported spirits, namely, 10*s.* per "proof gallon."

There was promised also an amendment of the banking laws, and of the laws affecting note issues. Although no particulars were given, rumour already spoke of a "national bank," and national note issues for Victoria. Certainly the trading world are destined to a periodical pang from the disposition of legislators and governments to revel periodically in the affairs of banking. A child rollicking with his club through a china-shop, impresses the spectator with something of the same feeling of doubt and devastation that impresses the commercial interests when they perceive that the Government and the statute book have got amidst them. When the subject was resumed more fully in the Treasurer's speech on 6th December following, the bankers and merchants took up the question. The proposal was to institute a government bank of issue, and to take from the present institutions their privilege of note circulation. The advantage of this plan consisted in giving undoubted security to the note-holding public, and in making available to Government the funds held in exchange for the note issues, as well as the large balances of the public revenue, that were once more, and with ominous recurrence, encumbering the exchequer. The proposition drew forth great variety and contradiction of public opinion, but in the main it

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was decidedly condemned. The Treasurer intimated that he would ask for a committee of the House to look into the whole subject of banking, and that the Government would be guided by the committee's report. But, as the change of administration had come before further steps were taken, the plan will now probably be dropped, excepting so far perhaps as pertains to the instituting of some one banking law for the various local companies; these being at present organised under separate and very dissimilar Acts of the Legislature.

The extension of the Electric Telegraph came next in the speech, upon which subject it was intimated that the Governments of the adjacent colonies having agreed to the great project of connecting the colonial capitals, they would apply to their respective Legislatures for the necessary powers and means.

The assimilation of Tariffs with these neighbouring colonies was a subject of pressing importance, since the recent opening of the navigation of the River Murray. This navigation was conducted from the South Australian territory; and where the rates of duty in that colony were lower for particular articles than in either Victoria or New South Wales, these articles would be introduced so as to undersell those that had paid the rate proper to the colony. Thus tobacco, having only one shilling per pound duty in South Australia, and two shillings in Victoria, was regularly sent from Melbourne up the Murray and brought back, *viâ* the gold-fields, to Melbourne again; with a profitable result to the owner,

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but at an inordinate sacrifice of revenue and labour to the public. The Governor of South Australia had been communicated with by the functionaries of the other two colonies, for the purpose of enacting suitable arrangements. The great object was to avoid the necessity of planting customs' establishments on the banks of the Murray. The present arrangement was that the South Australian Government levied according to its own Tariff on all goods ascending the Murray, and upon the declaration as to destination, distributed the proceeds of duty in accordance to each colony. But this plan did not prevent the evils alluded to, and an assimilation of the Tariffs was now sought for.

The difficult subject of education it was proposed to commit to the residents of school districts throughout the colony, who would be empowered to levy a rate for the support of education. The system was to "be based upon, and in consonance with, the religious sentiments of the people;" but parents might decline for their children the religious element offered at the school, and dissentient minorities of districts might in some instances be allowed schools of their own.

The State aid to religion, already adverted to in the preceding chapter, was to be continued; but the statute was to be altered so as to include religious bodies, being "subjects of Her Majesty, whose religious tenets are not subversive of morality and good government." This seems the only principle of civil equality if the Act is to continue; but the religious bearings have a most incongruous aspect.

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Improvement in legal procedure had been a subject of much popular discussion, but apparently of difficult attainment. The cumbrous conveyancing and other traditionary faults of the old country had all been, without let or hindrance on the part of the early imperial administration of the colony, reproduced in the new scene. The originality and vigour of a popular Government had now all the disposition to lay the axe to the root; the chief difficulty being the size which twenty years of wrong growth had given to the tree. Something by way of beginning was however promised at this stage, as there were to be facilities in the transfer of real estate and in the registration of these transfers. Steps were to be taken also, as far as Victoria was concerned, for a Court of Appeal for all the Australian colonies, and there were to be appeals to a Superior Court without the fiat of the Attorney-General. Doubtless the Attorney-General's experience in the futile "State trials" of the Ballarat rioters in the preceding year, induced him to improve the opportunity of the reforming movement by proposing to transfer to a grand jury the onus in future of pronouncing as to trials for political offences.

The last subject of importance alluded to was that of Emigration, or rather of Immigration, as it is correctly termed from the colonial point of view. It was proposed that this cause should be aided by considerable sums of money, and by the plan of partial payments of passages; leaving to the intending emigrants, or others interested in them, to pay the balance. In this way it

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was thought that, when arrangements had been put into motion, there would be annually a comparatively decreasing expense to the Government. It was further proposed to supersede the labours of the Home Emigration Commissioners, so far as Victoria was concerned, by the appointment of a staff in Britain directly under the Victorian Government.

The speech over, the work of the Assembly begins in right earnest. The semi-amateur legislation, practised by three-fourths of the House under the benumbing influences of the old system, is sensibly disappearing under the new *régime*. Business commences at three o'clock, and three-fourths are now found on their benches after midnight. This is more than some have bargained for, and as they are borne on by a resistless tide which gives no hope of return to the old moderation, they threaten to resign: threats, alas! unheeded, for now the sea is alive with other fish ready to leap into their vacated places, and maintain ample provision for the public table.

When the Assembly first opened, there was a general curiosity to watch the part of the House where each member took his seat. Few and far between, a scanty band glided to the ministerial benches; a large muster appeared on the opposition seats; but the largest body occupied the cross benches: as might have been expected in the still unsettled politics of the young Parliament and its new politicians. There was some animadversion as to these cross benches. Who had authorised these wary official traps, these convenient

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receptacles of wavering minds? The opposition could not restrain a motion of inquiry into the matter; which, if it had not been negatived by cross-bench delicacy in thirty-one votes against twenty-three, would no doubt have resulted in dragging into the light some mischief-making upholsterer, who had fitted the far sofas at a hard right angle, instead of terminating the parallel hostility of the two rows of cross benches by means of the fraternal semicircle. But at least the numbers of the cross-benchers make them a power in the State. In other respects they are supposed to revel in freedom, alike from political ties, from the trouble of co-operative discipline, and the fatigue of a decided mind.

In close succession come now upon the carpet the varieties of the legislative mind. The Government press on with the reforms promised in the speech. Their heels are trodden by the opposition, who have a programme of their own as to public policy, which they would rejoice to think of as having the least possible resemblance to that of their old antagonists across the table; but in which, at the same time, the long-standing differences between the two ideas have been annoyingly narrowed down by the sparkling liberalities of the late vice-regal address.

The Treasurer opens the ball with his budget, which expands into a speech of four ordinary columns. He has a pleasant tale to tell of financial and commercial well-being, which is excuse enough for the length of his story. The deficiencies and difficulties which had prevailed up to the middle of the previous year, are

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now all past and forgotten. A surplus revenue for 1856 is already in hand. The official estimates had predicted for that year a total revenue of 2,738,600*l.*, whereas eleven months of the year had already given the larger sum of 2,762,906*l.* The revenue for 1857 is estimated at 3,227,930*l.*, of which amount the customs alone would contribute 1,670,000*l.* These figures pertain to nations rather than colonies. The Treasurer expatiated on the subject of loans. The public debt of the colony did not yet amount to 2,000,000*l.*; but as the Government contemplated the construction of the main lines of railway as well as many other public works, the future became more encumbered, and its expenses were to be met by terminable annuities and by debenture issues, comprising small sums, so as to provide investments for all classes. The remarkable feature of the case was the plan of the Government Bank of Issue alluded to. The note circulation of the colony now exceeded 2,000,000*l.*, and the daily balance of the flourishing treasury averaged 700,000*l.* The Government with its future borrowings for public works, might avail itself of these resources instead of leaving them to bank proprietaries. The eyes of the Treasurer are upon the profits, but not the expenses of the official plan. The economic notions of a popular Legislature will not long tolerate a large surplus of revenue receipts over expenditure; while the two millions of issue, maintained by the active competition of the various banks and their branches throughout the

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country, would soon melt away under the passive procedure of a Government institution.

The Government bring forward their manhood suffrage project; but in this they still linger over the time-honoured "rights of property," by introducing a clause into their bill, (clause IV. of contentious remembrance,) which confers the franchise upon the same individual in each electoral district where he holds estate of a certain value; and therefore the opposite benches declare against the clause. The opposition goes for entire equality, in the circumstances of the colony, and would leave both material possessions and personal talents to maintain their own proper and very considerable weight in society. But in this the Government gains the day, for the property principle is affirmed by 29 to 24.

The first important step of reform upon the new constitution is thus taken by the Government; the opposition bring forward the second, which is a measure to abolish the property qualification for members in the Assembly. The Government oppose this proceeding; but it is their turn this time to be defeated, as the bill passes the House by a considerable majority. But the consent of a second House is now requisite; and as the Upper Chamber is a lion in the matter of qualification, the further course of the measure is not very predicable. That body, however, is considerate; for the Assembly is dealing with its own fabric, and not with theirs. But the scope of this argument throws up a small cloud upon the horizon, the omen of a future difficulty, when the time has come for reconsidering the fancy

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qualification under whose exclusive pale our Victorian senators are now appointed.

But a period to free Victoria's first administration had now arrived. They had committed one fault, in the inexcusable omission of constitutional forms with reference to the railway expenditure, and the narrow escape with life in that business might have been expected to have taught an effective lesson. But one danger was hardly past ere there was a similarly wilful plunge into another. An estimate for 270,000*l.* for purposes of immigration had been voted by the Assembly, on the customary good faith that it was the intention of the Executive to expend the money. But a bungling sentence, emitted subsequently from the official benches, exposed the awkward fact that the arrangements for the year had contemplated the expenditure of only 120,000*l.* The odd 150,000*l.* would keep an easy and serviceable exchequer for possible revenue deficiencies, or for those everlasting recurrences, the contingencies; while the 10,000*l.* of annual cost for the new emigration establishment in Britain would contrast far more favourably by its per centage on 270,000*l.* than upon the real outlay it was provided for of 120,000*l.*

So, at least, the opposition allowably reasoned, and no wonder that they stood to arms forthwith. The following resolution was therefore summarily put to the Assembly, and passed by a majority of twenty-nine to twenty-three:—

"That this House, before proceeding to the further consideration of the Estimates, feels bound to

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express its serious disapprobation of the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in obtaining a vote for immigration during the year 1857, that exceeds by nearly a sum of 150,000*l.* the sum they proposed to be expended on that service; a proceeding calculated to cause confusion in the public accounts, and render futile the laborious efforts of the Committee of Supply to introduce economy into the public expenditure."

The motion and its result was alike proper. But the popular party might well have preferred to have ousted their antagonists upon a larger principle. In the similitudes of criminal jurisprudence, they may be said to have arraigned for misdemeanor, when it ought to have been felony. Upon this vote, Mr. Haines and his coadjutors resigned office. Victorian political and progressive life was getting much too fast for the worthy Premier of the past order. He had dragged reluctantly through the Manhood Suffrage Bill; was conservatively shocked at the "naked democracy" of the opposition's amendment, with the portentous largeness of their minority, which probably his own promised readjustment of the electoral system would convert into a majority; and he probably, therefore, was not averse to retreat on the first opportunity from the dust and noise of this restless highway.

The mover of this resolution, Mr. O'Shanassy, was called to office, and after the customary interval, he appeared on the vacated benches with his ministerial

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colleagues. As the first administration, formed on a vote of the colonial Parliament, is a subject of historical interest, the reader may excuse the following list of the cabinet members: Chief Secretary, John O'Shanassy; Treasurer, J. V. F. L. Foster; Commissioner of Trade and Customs, A. F. A. Greeves; Commissioner of Public Works, C. G. Duffy; Commissioner of Crown Lands, G. S. W. Horne; Attorney-General, H. S. Chapman; Solicitor-General, J. D. Wood. We complete this list by the addition of the name of the new Governor, Sir Henry Barkly, who had arrived by the first steam-ship of the new postal line of the European and Australian Company, the "Oneida," in December previous, and had thus assumed the vice-regal seat in the midst of the most interesting crisis of the history of the country.

Those who are familiar with Victorian politics may apprehend, from a consideration of this list, some experience of the defect of coalition arrangements, while at the same time they may perceive the necessity that will at times arise for submitting to the system. The French have a saying, that it is only in the first step that the difficulties lie. And so may Victoria say of these initiatory movements. Some one must take this step, even at the risk of an insecure footing. We have yet to hear of the new Ministry passing the ordeal of their several constituencies; and granting that they emerge from this trial, they have still to satisfy themselves as to mutual suitability. Politicians cannot, any more than religious sectarians, band long together upon

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practical government, without a mutual accordance of sentiment upon abstract principles; for the shape and direction of the former are in constant association with the latter.

But, in truth, any heterogeneous composition of the new Cabinet is no incorrect reflection of the Assembly itself, whose cross benches, and other noviciatory features, may ensure an existence to its new Ministry that could not be reckoned on from its own constituent elements. The rapid developments of the future will soon supersede these speculations.

We shall now quit the familiar region of the present and the past, and direct a few observations to what is of even greater interest,—

THE FUTURE.

As Victoria advances to consideration as one of the world's nationalities, the free self-direction of her legislation, and the effect it produces upon her society, will form an interesting subject to the rest of the British people. Particularly with the parent state is this comparison interesting; for although the people in both places are the same, the circumstances are very sensibly different.

No effect of these circumstances is more conspicuous in the colonial case than the rapid realisation of those broad popular principles and democratic reforms that seem the general goal, whether near or far off, of our British people. Victoria effects in a week, a month, or

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during a legislative session, what our retentive old mother hesitates and labours upon for an age or a century. A feature equally noticeable, and certainly inspiring in this railway rate of progress, is the satisfactory effect of these reforms in the colony when once they are attained. There is a passing pang to the sprinkling of anti-democratic minds during the very act of change; but eventually, like the case of the relieved sufferer after a severe but effectual surgical operation, the momentary torture and the long preceding irritation have alike disappeared. Thus, for example, there is a notice of motion in the colonial Legislature, followed by a two days' discussion, and already the principle of the ballot has passed its ordeal. Within a few days it is the law of the country, and may be witnessed soon after at full work, to regulate and temper the exciting business of the elections. Nothing could have been easier than the whole process, both to introduce and to carry on, or more general than the satisfaction that attended it.

We have seen that the Victorian Assembly hesitated to commit itself to the pure manhood suffrage. There was an ominous argument made use of in defending the property clause, namely, that its privileges would be seldom acted upon, owing to the trouble of personal attendance at remote districts. Such will, probably, prove the case. The privilege, if it do not rest in abeyance, will be used at times to carry some purpose, and in nine cases out of ten with the favoured non-residents, this purpose will be the wrong one. But the experiment, of which the Government and its majority

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were afraid, had already been tried in the colony, and in a quarter that the distrustful would have thought of in the very last instance. A system tantamount to the general suffrage in question was in full operation among the mining population, and the result has been entirely satisfactory, as alluded to in a previous chapter.* The property clause of the Suffrage Act will not long, therefore, encumber the statute book; it must shortly share the fate of the Members' Property Qualification, which has already preceded it.

The electoral distribution is the grand battle-ground of a waning imperial party in the colony. Miscalled imperial, however, as it too often, from natural instincts and local political animosities, gets into a way of thwarting alike the imperial intentions and the colonial claims in the progress of popular principles and colonial freedom. The electoral inequalities of Victoria already adverted to remain, although the system that instituted them has passed away. They were only partially remedied in the New Constitution Act. Inequality will overtake this subject, and many others that are exposed to the accidents of time and progress; but the deliberate institution of inequality is here the question. Even the late Government proposed electoral reform, and the succeeding Administration is not likely to be less liberal.

Some important questions, in subjects both political and of a practical character, are now prominently before

* Beginning of Chapter IX.

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the colonial public, and I shall conclude my subject by a brief notice of some of the most interesting.

Australian Federation.

Ten years ago Earl Grey was anticipating a want of the Australian settlements. Had his federation scheme been then carried out, there might have been spared the delay and debate through which the question has yet to fight its way at the Antipodes. But as the colonists, who in the comparative unimportance of their concerns at that time were indifferent to the subject, are now alive to its merits, it is as well at last that they enjoy the moral exercise of fighting their own battle, and eliminating from the contention their own best interests. If I mistake not, as the law now stands, (a modification of Lord Grey's original view,) any two of the Legislatures of these colonies can initiate proceedings for a Federation.

The discussion on the question now proceeds more or less prominently in each colony. Victoria is first in earnest. Her central position and surpassing importance assure her that she has nothing to lose, whatever there may be to gain. Tasmania co-operates with Victoria, as their daily mutual intercourse and commerce, and the association of the former, early and late, with the race of Victorian colonisation, give to both very much of one general accord of purpose. New South Wales is more hesitating. A few years of the expanding commerce of her young sister Victoria has left

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the senior in the background, and she is not sure that the effect of federation may not be to make her second position yet more conspicuous. South Australia feels the gravitating power of both Victoria and New South Wales. The great external benefits make direct for Port Philip, from steam postal mails downwards; and as few but South Australians seem able to perceive that their own gateway has been needlessly overlooked, they have still a pleasant idea in the thought of independent action.

The tariff difficulties arising out of the recent navigation of the River Murray arrive opportunely upon the scene. Each colony has its separate tariff fancies, standing out in rather obstinate relief. Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania incline to the policy of considerable import duties on a few suitable import articles. But South Australia declares that there is a natural equity in a moderate duty upon all imports,—a notion which our "Melbourne Argus" well parallels by asserting that the natural rate of interest is five per cent. New Zealand is nowhere in particular, excepting in a general dissemblance. The Murray question exposes the tariff anomalies of the separative system. Victoria prohibits to South Australia, and equally to her own people, the promising river trade in the gold and auriferous black sand (Tin ore) of the Ovens district, because the first colony has an export duty on gold, while the other has not. Again: South Australia, by having a generally lower tariff rate on articles comprised in the Victoria and New South Wales lists,

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injures the revenues of the two latter colonies by admitting through the Murray these articles at reduced rates of duty. Thus a ponderous waggon which, at great cost of the time and labour of society, reaches Melbourne from the far interior, is found to contain not the commercial produce of that interior, but, to the wonder of the uninitiated, a goodly ton or two of American tobacco. The Customs' officer perfectly recollects the parcel, as he witnessed its being exported under bond to Adelaide three months previously. And now, having paid at that port the one shilling per pound rate of South Australian duty — just one-half of the Victoria rate, the restless commodity has been careering over nearly 3000 miles of land and water, the expenses being all amply made good out of the remaining half with a clear profit to the enterprising owner besides.

All parties are, happily, unwilling to annoy the intercourse and commerce of the river by vexatious Customs' stations, and therefore this traffic is not pronounced illegal; but who can contemplate such needless waste and such mal-arrangement among the subjects of one common government?

But federation is a delicate subject to approach. It will exalt Australia, but it will materially diminish the powers of the separate Legislatures. It will raise each component colony by the general elevation of the whole group, but it will circumscribe that gratifying scope of local government that each colony has just entered upon. Victoria—the most disposed for the arrange-

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ment—will not start the machine without some self-denial. She must consent for this purpose to a common electoral weight with her cautious neighbours. This will have the advantage, at least, of imposing the necessity of selecting men of large minds and national sympathies, and of avoiding the clog of a numerous body.

Federation would prove a wholesome restraint upon the faults of democratic energy and impatience. It places a certain scope of subject beyond the powers of the local Legislatures, and finds its authority effective in the democratic societies, because it has sprung, directly or indirectly, as may have been arranged, from the people themselves.

The question must, in a spirit of mutual deference, be urged on the simplest basis. At this moment, federative action may be agreed to on the tariff, although possibly not yet upon the postal, or perhaps any other subject of a general bearing. Why not then begin with a tariff federation? An age of delay may intervene in forcing a complicated scheme; and, meanwhile, as with the small German principalities, each colony will have become incurably merged in its own separate doings; and the united power, consideration, and effective government that might have been secured for them will exist only as a theory or a pleasant geographical picture.

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A Second Chamber, and Executive Relations.

The second chamber enjoys the title of the Legislative Council, as distinguished from the Legislative Assembly. The first was almost as unanimously asked for as the last, under the new constitution. And, doubtless, such a body has a prominent usefulness in what is called the constitutional system, now in operation in Australia. The feature of this system, or its defect, we might say, when applied to young and changing societies, is the merging of the executive in the reigning majority, for the time being, of the Assembly. Disregarding mere formal distinctions, the Assembly is thus alike the executive and legislative of the country.

But a colonial senate, to prove effective in this case, must enjoy more of public consideration than is likely, from its constitution, to be awarded to that of Victoria. With reference to the exclusive constituency that calls it into being, the observer of life in the colony must see that the position of independence there, which pertains to every class, and which, for all practical purposes, in fact, may be held to pertain to every individual, is far more effective, politically, than the position of wealth. The influences pertaining to the first, embody the energy and progress of the country, and these will not brook to be checkmated by the narrower range of the other. The Victoria Upper House, is thus, by public consideration, in reality the lower of the two; because it excludes from its franchise a body of the public that

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forms, collectively, the greater moral and political force of the country.

In two different ways might an effective second Chamber have been provided; namely, either by the double election of being drafted from the Assembly, or by the election of the whole people of the Assembly constituency upon one ticket (to use the transatlantic term), and by the whole country, as one electoral district. In either case a small number, and a large proportionate quorum, are indispensable alike to the effectiveness and the consistency of operations.

The Victorian Council has not as yet obtruded much upon public attention; but, judging from the defects of its constitution, it will, probably, ere long, lead the colonists to condemn the obstructiveness of such bodies; nor is the prospect improved, in this particular instance, by the Council's independence of dissolution by the Governor, in which feature it differs from the Assembly. But an effective federative system for all Australia might well dispense with the routine of this second chamber for each colony. Indeed, the conservating power of federation might stimulate to a few other steps out of the beaten track. The Governor of each colony might be nominated to the Queen by its own people, after some approved plan, so as to give that functionary a greater general influence than can be secured for him among his democratic subjects under the present arrangement. There might be a Governor-General for the whole group, a resident of veritable flesh and blood; or the mode might be by Royal Com-

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mission, as with the Scottish General Assembly of the Kirk—which commission might take the form either of pleasant hospitalities to an annual and distinguished visitor, or of a much simpler and more economical process, in these days of steam and telegraphs. In either of them, or in any other case, the business of Australian government promises to be henceforth a subject of little trouble, and less anxiety, to the mother country.

Taxation.

As already noticed with reference to law, so also with fiscal policy, our initiatory colonial Governments blindly imitate the parent country. Their members sit down to their desks as to a mere vocation that is to give them a livelihood, and thus a red-tape routine becomes the order of the day. When the people have at length attained to their own government, and the stimulus of responsibility is at work, the disposition is in the right direction for originality of thought and adaptation to the new circumstances; but the difficulty is to alter or remove the heavy edifice, figuratively speaking, that the preceding system has left upon the ground.

The facilities of indirect taxation, are ever in the way of the direct system, with its more equitable adaptations, but also its difficult application and its provocation of public scrutiny. One mode of the direct system is particularly desirable in the colony; that is, by a tax upon the

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sold land, as a source of revenue, in preference to duties on several articles of the present tariff. Levying this tax according to the current value of the subject, it should apply to all landed property, whether improved or not. We thus provide equitably for so much public revenue, while there is an effectual check upon the frequent colonial grievance of large areas of sold land being left waste in the midst of settlements, until the industry of others than the proprietors have advanced their value.

Victoria's first tariff had all the complications of the old system. The first local Legislature took immediate cognisance of the subject, and the new tariff of 1852 emerged from the general discussion with exemplary simplicity of feature. Some alterations were afterwards made, to meet increased revenue requirements, but the main features were still retained, and the great proportion of the Customs' revenue was derived from articles of large consumption but not necessaries, namely, tobacco and intoxicating drinks. Tea, sugar, and coffee, with moderate duties, are added to this list.

For these three last articles, which now yield together nearly a quarter of a million annually, there might be substituted a land-tax, by way of entering upon a more correct system than the present. The possession of land distinguishes, in some measure at least, the rich from the poor; and we must also remember that it is in connection with the protection of wealth, and the incidents of real estate, that the greater part, perhaps, of the public revenues are, more or less directly, required. If we throw the alcoholic relations into the lot, we could

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on this plan nearly complete the Victorian taxation revenues; while we should thus have collected pretty nearly all the causes, civil and criminal, of the ordinary yearly public expenditure.

The duty on the three necessaries alluded to costs each colonial family, rich or poor, much the same amount: say four pounds yearly. Assuming a land-tax to average two shillings per acre, which would be necessary to raise the gross sum in question out of the two and a half million acres of land now sold, the proprietor of a thousand acres would pay 100*l.*, and the smaller men less in proportion, while the landless crowd would, as regarded this proportion of the taxes, pay nothing. These arrangements are best instituted at the outset, or as near it as may be; for already the vested interest difficulty, which is so obstructive at home, may be expected to present itself in the colony.

The great extension lately given to the municipal and road-district systems, together with the proposed school system in Victoria, may eventually introduce the practice of a large proportion of direct taxation; but on the convenient and manageable plan of being both levied and expended within respective separate districts, instead of being first brought into, and then again rateably paid out of, the general exchequer.

The Public Lands.

The colony possesses now, what it had not prior to the new constitution, the power over its land regula-

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tions. But it is, above all things, undesirable to introduce change and uncertainty in this department, because it involves the social and commercial basis. No subject is one of a more suitable nature for federal legislation.

The old land regulations were substantially reaffirmed, after the debate in the new Legislature of 17th December last. These regulations provide for three different classes of the public lands when they are brought forward for sale; the first is not to be less than 8*l.* per acre, the second than 1*l.* 10*s.*, the third than 1*l.* per acre. All must be sold by public auction; but the third class may be open for selection at the upset price after the auction, if not sold. Leaving these regulations unimpaired, so far as they go, I would only notice a most desirable feature that might be grafted upon them without substantially altering the present system. Experience has repeatedly shown that the great fault in this system has been its inadequate expansion to the public wants, particularly at periods of any unusual enterprise. When the discovery of gold, or the tidings of high wages, or of a high rate of interest for money, or other attractive intelligence, causes a rush of population and capital into the colony, there is immediately a difficulty about the public lands. Thousands and ten thousands want land and cannot get it, excepting at ruinous prices at the crowded and excited public auctions. Adequate expansion either cannot or will not be given, and the many broad acres, that ought by the land theory to be "open for selection at the upset price," are scarcely to be met with, and afford but little

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relief. Hence the great rise in prices in the limited land market under these unwholesome circumstances, and the prosperity of the old residents; who rejoice at the welcome good times, as they naturally suppose them to be, until the infallible reaction overtakes them. But what can the crowds of immigrants do, who in such times are unable to get an acre of land at a price that they can make profitable for their support? Hence, therefore, the congregated miseries of Canvas Town, with its mortality and disorders, and the lamentable and vexatious re-emigration of a disappointed crowd, hastening back either to home and the penury they had left, or to some other more hospitable colonial soil than that of rich and negligent Victoria.

The easy acquisition of land is not in such cases an universal cure. But those who upon the spot have surveyed the past six years, can pronounce how much evil might have been avoided; and how, through mal-arrangements quite remediable in themselves, tens of thousands have been driven away, by the blankness of their prospects, from the richest and most flourishing settlement in the world.

What is wanted, as the subject appears to me, is a supplementary land regulation that will meet a special but very frequent case; which is that of new immigrants, and of persons intending to be permanently resident upon the lands they propose to acquire. For these, with their limited means and the heavy expense of subsistence and locomotion in the colony, the present

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system involves far too much delay and uncertainty. Scope of selection over the all but empty country, and promptitude of settlement, are what are wanted, and they are not now attainable. The years 1852 and 1853 gave the opportunity of settling the colony by wholesale process; but this was in great measure lost to its welfare, as well as to that of the disappointed victims. The opportunity may again come round, and let us hope that Victoria will then be better prepared to make the most of it.

Immigration.

A contention has been long smouldering in the colony about the disposal of the large proceeds of the land sales: as to whether they should be expended in the importation of labour-power into the colony, or in local improvements and public works; the first increasing the supply of labour, the second trenching upon its already limited quantity. This is in the main the old argument between employer and employed, although it is also something more. In the earlier times of non-popular government the employing interest had it all their own way, for the whole proceeds were sent home for "labour;" this arrangement being in accordance with Act of Parliament, under a theory, ostensibly, that the colonial lands, as national property, were thus made available to aid the emigration of the national poor. This is a fresh element of the question. When the popular development began, a compromise was made

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half way; and we have now to see how popular self-government will eventuate on this question.

The subject in its original bearings was instinctively an irritating one to the masses of the labouring class in the colony. Early in the year 1851, when I had occasion to be in Sydney, a public meeting for the promotion of immigration took place. The usual routine was being gone through by the lawyers, merchants, and pastoral employers, when the masses became clamorous at the whole procedure, and made a summary ending of the business. There is, perhaps, a fatuous tendency in having things too much and too long one's own way; and, accordingly, many of the discomfited confederates on this occasion could infer nothing from their lesson, save the increasing turbulency of democracy, and the desirableness of suppressing that inconvenient feature.

These turbulent subjects! had they not better lay their heads together to secure a regular importation of lawyers and merchants at the public expense, so as to reduce the ruinous fees and rates of commission prevalent in the colony, and falsely regarded as a symptom of its prosperity? So they, in their turn, might argue. They may thus either transfer the turbulence from themselves, or at least make it a general feature. Either result will help to show that, where the efforts of the Government are given, they had best be made instrumental in adding to the colony not labour merely but society.

The Victorian Government, after transmitting first the whole, subsequently the half, of the land proceeds,

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have latterly, since the gold discoveries, been sending occasional sums, just as the feeling of the day with reference to the labour necessities seemed to suggest. There was at one time previously a partial attempt with the view of combining class equities with good policy on this subject. This was by allowing to land purchasers, for their own labour requirements, the rights to free passages from Britain, by Government emigration vessels, to the extent of four-fifths of their purchase money; or, as it might be read, to the extent of the whole, less the expenses. But this system was hardly sanctioned a day ere the free passage rights were in the market, passing as glibly from hand to hand as any other merchandise. It was, therefore, soon after given up.

The new Government has opened its propositions for the present by projecting an emigration establishment of its own in Britain, thereby superseding the Imperial Commissioners of Emigration, who have already received notice that their services for Victoria will be discontinued after the 30th of June next. A suggesting cause for the change appears to have arisen from remarks last year in the House of Commons, on the occasion of taking a vote for the emigration establishment. An objection having been raised to paying for home establishments to promote emigration to the colonies, the remark in reply was, that the Commissioners did not "promote," but simply regulated what came before them. Victoria prefers the promoting system, and assumes the charge for herself.

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The plan of operations contemplated chiefly some open system of partial payments of passage money, with the view of balancing Victoria's disadvantage as to distance and cost of voyage, compared with the rival fields of North America. A system of advocacy is understood to be also in view, by which, at some pains of accurate and frequent information, the colony will be made more familiarly known than it is to the masses of the British people. In this way it is expected that the required pecuniary aids may be gradually lessened, relatively to numbers.

The excessive proportion of males since the gold discoveries renders it desirable to direct the finances chiefly to the aid of female emigration; excepting with reference to special temporary cases, as, for example, with extensive railway works. There has been of late a growing disposition to this policy, which furnishes a happy escape from the contentions just treated of. In the social department of qualified domestic servants, the colony could scarcely be overcharged.

A system restricting the public aid to female immigration would probably work best for all interests. The arguments in its favour do not depend on the mere allaying of the class contentions evoked by the old system, although this is itself a primary point in connection with the strong equality tendencies of colonial feeling. I may trust that such contentious aspects of their case do not agitate the breasts of the gentler sex; who, as the rival handmaidens pour into the colonial market, will have a vision ahead only of more

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marriages, more housekeeping, and more service. The circumstance that on a large scale the colony is giving free passages to the female proportion of families, may powerfully stimulate general emigration, and perhaps influence quarters heretofore lost to the old system. In no other way, I think, can we hope to equalise the sexes in Victoria, or even make any near approach to that desirable condition. By such a plan, too, the Government would be decidedly nearer the true position already hinted at; namely, of aiding, by the immigration arrangements, not the interests of any one or more classes, but the general cause of society.

The latest published report on immigration from the colony is for the year 1855, from which it appears that the total immigration for that year, after deducting emigration, was 40,176; of whom 27,304 were males, while only 12,872 were females. Of these numbers, the proportion of Government-assisted immigration was 9,245; the males being 3,149, and the females 6,096. The great disproportion of males thus left to the free immigration is due partly to the Chinese, who comprise, almost without exception, a male immigration. The amount sent home by the colonial Government for that year's emigration was 151,135*l.*, and the total cost for each "statute adult," including 12,000*l.* for collecting expenses, was 18*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.*

It may be interesting for emigrants from Britain to Victoria to learn that there is in active operation an "Immigrant's Aid Society," which was instituted in the beginning of 1853, partly by private and by

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Government subscription. It was called into being in consequence of the cost and difficulty at the time of procuring lodging, and by the accumulating miseries of Canvas Town. Happily these costs and difficulties are now much diminished, and Canvas Town has entirely disappeared. The society, however, is still found useful. At the fourth annual meeting, in January last, the report mentioned that assistance had been given to upwards of 1200 persons during the previous year, at an expenditure of 2,155*l.* 17*s.* The society possesses a building of timber for accommodation of persons newly arrived until they can procure employment. Their baggage also is taken care of, subject to a small charge. There are lodgings for female servants out of place, until they can get fresh engagements. Assistance is given almost entirely in kind, instead of money. Besides its considerable original subscriptions, the association is supported from a share of impounding fees, and from small charges upon the successive inmates.

Colonial Railway Policy.

The Victorian authorities appear to have decided upon two modes with regard to railways, both of them of questionable policy. The first is that the Government should construct and own the lines; the second, that the works should be at the outset, if not quite so expensive as the English model, at least of the substantial and costly description.

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The depression caused by the late war defeated for the time the calculations of private enterprise in the chief Victorian railway projects. Some lesser projects passed the ordeal. The Government, however, on the partial failure, changed its first policy, which was favourable to the constructions of private enterprise. This failure cannot affect the principle of the case. The Government may at any time ensure private success by affording a sufficient inducement.

Besides the usual arguments for keeping the hands of Governments free from such sources of extravagance, corruption, and so forth, as large railway constructions, the heavy public debt with which it encumbers the State is injurious, as tending to restrict other required public works of a more strictly State character.

There are well-known cycles of enterprise connected with the home money-market during which every feasible railway scheme of Victoria would be readily taken up and carried through, as has been done in so many other places, without any trouble to Government or any very oppressive guarantees being called for. Such seasons were those of 1835 and 1836, and 1844 and 1845. If another such era, sweeping onwards, should find the Victorian Government still toiling with its single hand through the great railway necessities of the country, and thus interposing between the colony and the general enterprise that seeks it from without, Victoria will be in danger of missing a position that ten or twenty years of subsequent exertion may scarcely make good to her.

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The argument, apparently relied on by the colonial Government for the substantial constructions, is better for mathematics than ordinary life and progress. That a railway, commenced on the cheap plan, but after some years ended with the substantial, will cost more than if the latter had been made at the first, may be quite true; but this does not answer the entire question. The cheap line is ventured upon when the costly one would not have been tried at all; it is much sooner constructed; and the colony that prefers to luxuriate in the substantial railways must be content to have fewer of them. In a country filled, like Victoria, with industrial life, profitably occupied, but labouring under difficulties of intercommunication, the chief railway arguments bear on the question of the time occupied in the construction. The first projectors of the Mount Alexander line, in the year 1852, were induced to bring out their enterprise from a calculation which showed that the enormous rates of carriage then prevalent along the proposed line would amount, during the six months only of winter's bad travelling, to a sum almost enough to construct the railway.

The subject is one I do not pretend to analyse further; but, before concluding it, I subjoin the substance of some remarks by Sir William Denison, the present Governor of New South Wales, in a public lecture on railways delivered at Sydney in May, 1856. His Excellency, who is a good authority on this subject, observed that, what was chiefly wanted in Australia

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was cheap and easy traction, rather than great speed There was a question, therefore, as to the advantage of horse or steam power. To indulge in the last, very great expenses were requisite as compared with what sufficed for the first. For great speed there was required, of course, locomotive machinery; and for this "the line must be straighter in plan, less steep and r t, a d less undulating in section; the rail must be heavier, and all the work upon the road more massive and substantial; while even upon the more solid road, the wear and tear of the heavy locomotion going at speed will be far greater than that caused by horse traffic." Such a line would probably cost double of what would be necessary for horse power, besides a wear and tear in proportion. The advantage, then, of a speed of more than ten or twelve miles per hour for passengers, was to be weighed against very serious expenses. In the present circumstances of the country the best policy seemed to be to adopt the cheaper although the slower mode.

With these views His Excellency could scarcely have passed the following estimates of the Victorian Government on the subject of its railway projects. I premise that the works are to be made suitable for a double line, but the estimates are for a single line, which is to be used in the mean time:—

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	Miles.	Cost.	Per Mile.
		£	£
Melbourne to Harcourt Junction .	71	2,998,361	42,000
Castlemaine branch . . .	5	287,794	57,500
Harcourt to Sandhurst . . .	17	943,461	55,500
Sandhurst to Echuca (nearly level) .	56	821,200	14,600
Geelong to Ballarat . . .	53	2,078,933	39,000
	202	7,129,751	35,000

Prison Discipline.

Victoria has to thank the transportation system of the mother country for the large experience she enjoys of the phases of prison and criminal life. The subject of this section has assumed a primary importance in colonial public affairs since the gold discoveries. Those events were soon signalised by a continuous influx of the Van Diemen's Land convicts; followed, of course, by a frightful outbreak of crime, and in due time by prisons overflowing with criminals. So rapidly was this drama developed, that the inadequate prison system was of necessity extended by a variety of makeshifts. Additions were hastily made to the prison accommodation by the erection of "stockades," and the purchase and fitting up of several ships as penal hulks; and, as no general indoor discipline had been organised, the prisoners were put out daily in great numbers to labour upon the roads and other public works.

At this stage a Legislative Committee, of which I was a member, inquired into the subject, and in September

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1852 presented a report. This document expressed a strong condemnation of the makeshift quartering of the criminals, as well as of the dispersive arrangements into which the prison system was lapsing, and also gave an opinion totally opposed to the employment of prisoners upon roads or public works — in short, to their being permitted at all beyond the prison precincts into the public view. Substantial prisons, and areas securely walled for purposes of discipline, were recommended, as being, no matter at what first cost, the true economy in the end, both financial and moral.

The Government did not dispute the principles, but pleaded the difficulties of the times, and went on as before. The adequate prisons were never undertaken, either then or subsequently. The stockades were extended, and the hulks filled to the brim. The views of the public were directed successively to other affairs, and the prison question lay comparatively at rest. Only now and then would some event pertaining to the prison system arouse a passing attention, and give an impression that prison matters were not as they should be. Some members of a road gang, for instance, seduced by the fresh air of heaven, the open fields before their eyes, and the longings of human nature, have made a rush for liberty. The neighbours hear a rattle of musket shots; they see a running to and fro; and presently they find their fields sprinkled with human blood; while the next Gazette methodically relates that four persons had run off, one of whom was killed, one wounded mortally, the others hit but escaped,

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concluding about a handsome reward for their recapture: it is the only thing handsome in this lamentable episode.

So sleeps the question for above four years, when it awakes in earnest to the accumulated evils. This new activity is occasioned by another of the rushes for liberty, which, as before, takes place among the group employed on the public works. The aggravated and daring features of this case arouse a general attention; which is equally directed, although under a different feeling, to certain vindicatory statements, made at the trial of the criminals, by the principal offender, a notorious individual, called Melville. There is this good result, that both the Legislature and the colonial public are now occupied with a full investigation and discussion of the whole question of prison discipline.

This attempt at escape, which was of a most determined character, was made on the part of ten of the prisoners of the penal hulk, the "Deborah," lying off Williamstown, and took place on the 22nd of October, 1856. These men seized the opportunity, while they and others were being towed in a barge from their work-ground on shore back to prison in the afternoon. A small boat, manned by a police-guardsman and four seamen, had the barge in tow; and the project was, to seize this boat, get rid of its hands, and make for safety by either land or sea. The boat was accordingly rushed, and after a brief conflict the prisoners were observed in possession and pulling outwards as if to round Cape Gellibrand. Some ship's tackling, however,

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interposed and disconcerted them; when, perhaps hopeless now of escape, they pulled for shore, but were presently overtaken by the authorities and all secured. The guardsman's head was broken by a hammer, (wielded, according to the evidence, by Melville,) and his body thrown overboard. Another of the force was also murdered, while of the convicts one was shot and another drowned. The prisoners were all men under very long sentence; Melville for no less than thirty-two years, and the others for periods varying from ten to twenty-two years.

Captain Melville, as he was called, had been a ringleader in all mischief. It was he who acted as principal in the famous gold-robbery on board the ship "Nelson," in Hudson's Bay, several years before. Of course with such diplomas he had been a British convict. He seemed a man who, by other than Van Diemen's Land and Victorian criminal discipline, might have been turned to some account less mischievous to society. A long and able address which he delivered on the occasion of his trial, illustrated conspicuously two features; first, the incessant outbreak of human passions on the part of gaolers and officers towards the criminals they had charge of, under a system of discipline either very erroneous or very badly administered; and secondly, the unfavourable effects upon the prisoners of these and other physical inflictions, even when given in patent accordance with law. The law and its agents seemed alike a ministration of pure vengeance; and this feeling in the great majority of cases shut out from the prisoner the

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consideration of his own wickedness, and impressed him only with the view that his lot was cast in a state of life-long war with society and its myrmidons of justice.

Melville's statement was doubtless grossly overcharged. There is abundant room for this allowance, with still a strong case to boot; and the general tenor of his remarks was confirmed by a profusion of other evidence, trustworthy in its collective accordance. The physical inflictions upon the prisoners were, in fact, far less conspicuously a punishment than a brutalising stimulus, which in many cases irritated the criminal into still graver crimes and infractions of discipline.

The unsuitable and overcrowded prisons seemed an obstacle to all effective discipline. The prison arrangements could not prevent repeated opportunities and incitements to mischief and the outbreak of evil passions, which caused an incessant breach of the prison rules and the commission of fresh crimes. Most of such offences might be prevented by better prisons and prison arrangements. The sleeping apartments at the stockades, for example, would contain sixty inmates or upwards, ranged together in tiers nearly to the roof, with a guardsman at either end outside, momentarily watching by an open grating to restrain the most debasing crimes. What an atmosphere, moral and material, whether for the reform or the punishment of erring human nature!

What, then, are we to deduce from this contentious question? 1. That there should be central prisons,

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commodious for purposes of health and discipline, and perfectly secure for custody: no stockades, hulks, or makeshifts of any kind: the fewer the prisons, and the nearer their situation in each case to a large body of the public and an effective press, the better. 2. No exposure of prisoners beyond the prison precincts. 3. No physical punishments as a rule of prison discipline; but instead, modifications of solitude, with prison arrangements that will prevent the occurrence of many offences now common, and difficult to be dealt with: no possibility of indulging the least hope of escape. 4. Officers of every kind to be selected for character and forbearance. 5. A system of general employment: labour of mind or body given as a reward rather than a punishment. 6. The criminal to have an appreciable interest in the proceeds of his labour.

There seems, I think, a growing tendency to views of this kind. They are applicable very forcibly to the grave offenders so numerous in the colony, and to the severe sentences awarded to them. There is the misfortune of crime, as well as its guilt; and it is not a mere misplaced humanity that regards the most hardened criminals with a slight share of the consideration extended to the still greater cast-aways of a lunatic asylum. It would be well, indeed, if this view of the case were a little more prevalent, so as to protect society from the daily indiscriminate release of criminals, whose return to crimes, and with only increased appetency, may in many cases be predicated as surely as the revolution of the planets. Here we have indeed a new

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phase of the subject. An improved reformatory discipline may enable us to shorten the sentences of the many, and thus diminish the expense of crime. But at the same time those known incurable offenders, who, we may hope, form the few of the criminal phalanx, must be far more carefully looked after, and their personal liberty less ceremoniously dealt with, than has heretofore been our custom.

"A Foreigner," writing in one of the Melbourne papers*, and opposing our prison system, which he stigmatises as a barbarous revenge of society on its criminals, rather than a reformatory school, gives us the Prussian system. No confinement extends over ten years. The prisoner is confined by himself at first; his cell is well ventilated, and lighted from the roof. If he prove long refractory, the light is obscured. After a time he has work given him, if he asks for it; and subsequently, on good conduct, he is allowed to work with his fellow-prisoners. No unkindness towards him is allowed.

There are good lessons in this brief paragraph from a foreign school. In mere punitive effect such a mode of discipline, which is, so far, the one here contended for, would not perhaps be behind any system having punishment as its prime object. The monotony of solitude, and even a studied forbearance, are a part of criminal discipline as yet but little investigated amongst us, although they are known to be a lever so powerful

* "The Age," Nov. 22. 1856.

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as to demand to be carefully wielded with mercy and judgment. In the contradictions of our inexperience, the system is alternately assailed as too lenient and too merciless. If justice cannot insist that we owe these forbearing courses to the criminal, an argument may yet be urged that we owe them to the general well being, which certainly demands that we do not, for the sake of punishment or revenge, persevere in a prison system that only makes the offender worse and more dangerous than before when we restore him to society.

The Transportation Question.

The Anti-transportation League, in Australia, was an organisation which necessarily had some anti-imperial aspects, and was therefore reluctantly carried out, save as to a steady resolve to carry one sole object. It unfurled its flag, and like a previous stern association, declared its solemn league and covenant. There was a pleasant reflection to the still loyal colonists, that their attitude was one solely of social and moral bearings. They proved this by the result, for so soon as the object was gained, the flag disappeared, and the league was dissolved.

England seemed to have entered upon a new policy as to her criminals, that would at least prevent them from being thrown into other societies than her own. But there is now, or at least there has been of late, a strong cry for the resumption of the old system. England has tried some new plan, and is already tired of

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it. She is fertile in breeding crime, but is not impressed that she has thence any duty to bear its consequences. Her chief solicitude after she has given it birth, is to cast it out of her sight—to have nothing to do with it.

Last year, 1856, both Houses of Parliament reported the result of their inquiries on the subject. The Lords came to no definite conclusion, beyond the expression of a well-hedged opinion that "the continuance of transportation would be highly desirable, provided it can be carried on with advantage to a colony and satisfaction to its inhabitants." The Commons more directly recommended the resumption of transportation. West Australia, which had agreed to receive the convicts, had been taking only a little over 300 per year for three years past, and could not at the utmost absorb more than 700 or 800 a year, while 10,000 await disposal. The report directs attention to North Australia as a resource in the event of other places not offering.

Transportation has never entirely ceased in England, but it has latterly been upon a reduced scale, absorbing only the worst class of offenders. The experiment now going on of penal servitude at home, with subsequent tickets of leave, was commenced as a substitute in 1853. The plan of the new Act of the present year, is that the criminal be sentenced to a certain length of "penal servitude," while the executive is left to arrange his subsequent disposal, whether for transportation abroad or penal servitude at home.

Whether the stream be directed to West or to North

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Australia, Victoria well knows, alike from experience and common sense, that between the indirect form of transportation to her territories, which this is, and any other mode more straight towards her, she has but little to choose. They will both eventuate in throwing the criminals into her attractive colony. I fear that already in this way an evil is gathering, and threatens an infelicitous crisis. West Australia, weary of the slow growth from her own resources, invited the aid of the convict expenditure and the convict labour. The colony is now replete with the criminal element, which, with little exception, had not hitherto flowed out elsewhere. This antigravitation aspect, however, is due to a cause that is probably very temporary — namely, the scanty information in that hitherto isolated colony regarding the thriving colonies of the south-east coast, and the all but total want of the means of conveyance. The late steam postal arrangements provide for a call at West Australia only in proceeding from, and not to, Melbourne. A short year or two and this state of things must be at an end. The very first steamer that takes the opposite course will probably receive a deck load of several hundred "expiree" or runaway convicts, as passengers from the convict colony to Port Phillip.

What would be the result? I have no hesitation in saying that the landing would not be permitted on the part either of Government or people. It is of no use in such cases, as has been already experienced, to urge this or that argument from constitutions or statutes.

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Self-preservation is the first right, and other people's rights are the second. Laws are for normal conditions, and Britain herself has induced the anomaly. Permit these men to land, and within a brief season of so grave a misfortune, and traceable to it, a hundred families of Victoria may have to mourn as many diversified calamities, some of them perhaps irremediable on this side the grave.

Is there not quite another view of this subject, and may we not dispute the only part of the report of the hesitating Peers on which their minds seemed clear — viz., that the transportation system was in itself "highly desirable?" The facilities of transportation seem, indeed, to have been England's great stumbling-block in the way of her criminal policy. While the detection of crime is reaching the marvels of perfection, the prevention system has scarcely yet risen into notice. Eleven years ago, when the revelations flowing in from Van Diemen's Land struck the nation with horror, and when transportation seemed finally doomed in the eyes of the penitent country, an earnest and vigorous thought began to be directed to the root of the evil. To that movement, which has been more or less upheld ever since, we owe the inestimable ragged schools, and the promising but still imperfect reformatory institutions. What all these aids and appliances have already effected seems almost miraculous, and illustrates not more their own suitableness than the neglected state of the field they have entered. Dr. Cumming, of London, in a late discourse connected with ragged schools, alluded to the

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fact that in the streets of Dundee, a place that had once its full share of the rags and misery that characterised large manufacturing towns, there was now scarcely an idle boy or girl to be met with.

But all this uphill work is irksome to England. The constant presence of crime in our midst, which should act as a spur of Providence to stimulate society to remedial efforts, is to her only a cause of alternate hatred and alarm. The nauseous medicine that should work for her benefit is not swallowed, but cast out to defile others, and the reform and progress go with it.

New Colonisation, Convict Settlements, and Northern Australia.

The preceding section having opened these questions, I shall, before concluding, give a few thoughts on their subject, and from the Australian point of view. One of the pleas for a new convict colony and a renewed transportation system, is their presumed advantage and necessity for the development of Northern Australia.

At a time when most people were under the impression that any extensive colonisable and vacant territory was no longer to be met with in the world, some of the most promising discoveries have taken place. Twelve years ago Leichhardt explored North Australia, and pointed to the peninsula east of Carpentaria, as well as other places, as fields suitable for

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extensive colonies and tropical commerce; and only last year the expedition made from the Victoria River into North-western Australia has resulted in showing a still further extension of this magnificent but hitherto waste dominion of the empire.

In this expedition Gregory found that the Victoria presented the all-important feature, so rare in Australian rivers, of an open mouth, by which free access was afforded to large ships. It did not indeed penetrate more than three degrees into the interior, but it had a copious stream, with a largeness of volume second only to the Murray, while its very winding course was the means of its watering a large area of country. Much of this country bore the Australian feature of clear and lightly timbered grass land. Nor was the climate felt to be unhealthy or tropically oppressive, notwithstanding the vicinity of the equator. Here, then, from Victoria River in the north-west, to York Peninsula in the north-east, with the River Mitchell and its moist and fertile flats, is a vast area of the future sugar, rice, coffee, and cotton fields of our national commerce.

In viewing the future of every Anglo-Saxon settlement the gravest question probably is, whether or not the European race is to constitute the society throughout all its grades. Or is it to be, that from climate or from aboriginal possession, there is permanently intermingled a mass of inferior race? In both cases there may be the most flourishing commerce, possibly too the best police and the most established civil order; but as regards the nobler destinies of humanity, the two cases

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are probably as distinct in their respective issues as the darkness and the light.

In a thoroughly tropical climate, unsuited to the European constitution as a field of general operative industry, the high destinies of the first must be foregone. The Victoria River territory is doubtless a future colony of the second order. Situated in the vicinity of the hives of the dark races, where the policy of encouraging their importation should be adopted, and in fact must be adopted if a prosperous colony be the object, the early difficulties of colonisation cease; for these, in a country of natural resources, are chiefly questions of labour supply. Let the British authority be but established, and encouragement held out to British enterprise, so as to secure a few capitalists and employers of labour, and the colony is launched easily and inexpensively, with a prospect in accordance with its own seemingly great resources; all of which may be duly done justice to. Our young settlement of Aden, in Southern Arabia, is the most recent instance of the facilities and success of this kind of colonisation. This little speck of British territory already swarms with superabundant labour power, attracted from Africa as well as the nearer neighbourhood by the unwonted benignities of a British rule. The same result may be anticipated for North-western Australia, situated, as it is, adjacent to the myriads of the Malay race. This fund of labour power, its cheapness, and tropical efficiency, are the only things wanted to assure the commercial development. Port Essington, a former

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experiment in another part, was a mistake, both as to local climate and selection of situation.

A colony at the Victoria is an experiment, therefore, worth trying. It will soon pay its own way, and most likely repay the parental nurture a thousand times over. The account will be all the more satisfactorily arranged to the imperial parent, as such colonies are likely to remain under direct imperial government, instead of requiring, like the settlements of temperate Australia, their political freedom. The two cases are widely different. The authority that invited the miscellaneous subjects of the tropical settlement must continue to protect them; and, by maintaining laws of justice and humanity between the helpless many of the inferior and the overriding few of the superior race, prevent those slave institutions that are perhaps the inevitable defection of human nature, when abandoned to its own guidance under the conjoint difficulty of a tropical moral feeling and a tropical labour question.

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NOTES ON THE OVERLAND ROUTE

FROM AUSTRALIA TO ENGLAND, VIÂ SUEZ.

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INTRODUCTION.

As this steam-postal route, now happily re-established, is likely to be a favourite line of travel with our Australian colonists revisiting their mother country, I make that circumstance my excuse for adding the following chapter of some of its incidents to this work. Great part of these notes, too, refers to Australia and the commerce of Victoria.

Now that European war is past and the spirit of enterprise is abroad on the world, more steam routes than that of Suez are likely to contend for a share of the increasing stream of Australian passengers and commerce. On the line of route by the Cape of Good Hope there are already several large screw steamers, sailing respectively from Liverpool and London; and the Panama line will no doubt once more arouse attention. The Victoria colonists have mostly preferred the Suez route, upon considerations of its relative shortness of distance and the contingency of the Indian commerce; while, on the other hand, the way by Panama has enjoyed the preference of the people of Sydney, whose noble harbour, opening upon the vast Pacific, naturally woos the commerce of that greatest of earth's oceans.

The circuitous route by the Cape is free from the

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great disadvantage of a barrier of land intercepting the continuity of the voyage, and rendering necessary two steamers for one expedition, together with the inconvenience and expense attending overland passage and transshipment. The gigantic scheme of the Suez canal, whose merits have not been of late allowed to sleep by its indefatigable projectors, promises to obviate the disadvantage alluded to, in regard to this the shortest of the Australian routes. There are eight millions of preliminary difficulties, however; and, when these have been overcome, there is still an interval of construction that compares like an age to the rapid life of Australia.

If this attainment be feasible, its prospect at any rate is somewhat remote; but, when accomplished, there must be an advantageous change for Australia. The present passage from Melbourne *viâ* Suez is considered to be well performed if within forty-eight days by way of Marseilles, with four days more by the circuit of Gibraltar. Some of the remarks in the following pages may show how much greater speed may be attainable even with the steam-boat powers now available to the world, if they are only energetically applied. With the same rate of speed, and arrangements for an equal diligence in coaling on the other side of Suez that we experienced on this side (the "Jura" steamer having shipped her coals at Malta at the rate of eighty tons per hour), we might have reached the head of the Red Sea from Port Phillip a week or even ten days sooner.

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With adequate arrangements, therefore, the passage might even now be effected from Melbourne to London *viâ* Marseilles within forty days. The electric telegraph from the latter place is an anticipation of two days upon this time, and, as a faster steamer between Malta and France is among the list of things possible as well as desirable, there may still be further abbreviations of our great enemy.

The realisation of the canal project sends us some few years, perhaps more than a few, ahead; and by that time the intermediate progress may have lifted the question of Australian communications to a new platform. That progress is an unknown quantity, but it is sure to be a large one. We have to see, for instance, how the "Great Eastern" comports herself in fulfilling the anticipation, even by the circuit of the Cape, of a thirty-three days' passage to Melbourne.

The canal does not promise to effect much directly in regard to speed, seeing that the railway from Cairo to Alexandria is already in operation, while that from Cairo to Suez is now more than half finished. The results are rather of an indirect character. The great benefit to arise from the canal would, as I believe, consist in the invasion of the monopolised Indian seas and in the consequent stimulus of competitive interests. On this side of Suez there is a lively competition; on the Australian side there is none. In the first case, a speed of twelve or thirteen knots an hour is barely

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satisfactory; in the second, there seems a mysterious limitation at ten knots; and even the finest steamers are caught trailing along at the rate of seven, when they leave the latitudes of competition and glide comparatively out of reach and reckoning into remote seas. With an open way from the Mediterranean into the Red Sea, the various rival European steam companies will not all halt as hitherto at Alexandria; and they may thus shortly demonstrate that speed and general efficiency can be appreciated and supported to the south as well as to the north of the present peninsular barrier.

But in whatever way the canal question may eventuate, we are in the meantime right glad to enjoy the Suez communication just as it still geographically stands; only let us hope that, even for the remaining four years of the present steam-postal contract, the new European and Australian Company will find themselves able to effect the passages within some shorter time than their contract specifies. Rising up with pleasant distinctness in the back-ground is the subject of electric telegraph communication with Europe; and I am glad to observe that already the Legislature of New South Wales is estimating the cost of a telegraph line to Sydney, traversing Northern Australia from the locality adjacent to our Indian settlements.

Edinburgh: June 18th, 1857.

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OVERLAND NOTES.

CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE FROM MELBOURNE.

The "Simla" and her Passengers.—Ships in the Harbour.—The "Great Eastern."—Schnapper Point.—Harbour of Port Phillip.—Queenscliff.—Cape Otway and Apollo Bay.—Portland Harbour.—Bush-fires.

THE re-establishment of the Overland mail, after an interval very long in the rapid life of Australian colonies, seems like cutting off by one half the wide distance between England and these settlements. The interruption of such a commanding line for so long a period as three years, with the position Australia has now acquired in the imperial system, may be attributed to the engrossing cares and absorbing costs of the late war; which has in many other ways seriously retarded Australian progress, great as that still appears to be. If, therefore, we had no loftier object, we Australians, for our own sakes, beseech of the crowned heads and diplomatists of the other hemisphere, to avoid the unprofitable

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spectacle of the carnage of their subjects and countrymen.

I left Melbourne on the 14th of February to embark by the "Simla" for Suez. We were to touch successively at King George's Sound in West Australia, at Galle in Ceylon, at Aden in Arabia, and finally land upon the highly classic and scriptural ground of Suez; and I had before me a pleasant resumption of old acquaintance, as I had travelled on the same route about four years previously. I mark on this occasion a great improvement in the conveyance, for the "Simla" is a noble vessel with lofty accommodations. She is iron-built, with screw propeller, and in first-rate repute for speed. She belongs to that colossal steam-boat proprietary, the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and has been chartered by the new body lately formed under the title of the European and Australian Company, who have contracted with the Home Government for the conveyance of the Australian mails, *viâ* Suez, for a period of five years.

Here we are then, assembled on Saturday evening in the spacious cabin of the "Simla," five-and-thirty passengers in all, including nine who have come on from Sydney, and two or three who have come round to meet us from Adelaide, and who grumble that their port should be passed over in the new arrangement. The mail question promises to be fertile in discords amongst our group of colonies. The burden of indignation is, at present, from South Australia, which, as yet, refuses any share towards this expensive postal system;

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although her merchants look very wistfully for the regular budget, which the good will of the contributing colonies permits to be conveyed to them.

But to return to the passengers: although their numbers on this occasion are altogether insufficient to remunerate, this source of loss is, probably, but temporary. The first year or so is the season of trial, until the colonists are familiarised with the route, its shortness as to time, its regularity, and the attractiveness of its incidents. Already the possibility of visiting England and returning within five or six months, begins to operate, as we have several passengers with us who were swayed by that circumstance. I must, however, notice, what is the universal opinion, that the passage money is too high when it exceeds 100*l.* The rates are 120*l.* to 140*l.*, with 5*l.* extra when from Sydney; and when, besides, we have to pay for wines, the cost is so much beyond that of ships and steamers by the usual homeward route that the latter will not readily be abandoned, — the waves and snows of Cape Horn notwithstanding.

The company have since reduced their rates to 100*l.* from Melbourne to England, and to considerably less from England to Australia. I have said that the first year of the new company will prove their difficulty, and absorb probably much more than the first year's contract money, large as the sum of 185,000*l.* may appear; but we may hope that, ere the last of the five comes round, our motto of "Advance Australia" may have been verified sufficiently to exhibit,

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in active operation, all the rival lines that have been long disputing with that of Suez the palm of merit; and supported without any such bonus as that which helps the initiatory movements of the European and Australian Company.

In stowing our luggage in the cabins, we find the use of the regulations as to dimensions of packages; for, having attended to the injunctions in this respect, we can stow away our trunks under our beds to our great convenience. The vessel being little more than one-third full, we have all abundance of room and of fresh air. Some of the knowing ones in matters of comfort — old hands, perhaps, who have gone an Indian voyage — have found out that the steamer has no ice on board, and they would fain mar our prospective comfort by that fact.

On Sunday morning, at a little after nine, we were off. The weather was calm, but very pleasant with the breeze caused by the steamer's motion. Around us were many of the finest ships to be seen in any harbour, varying from 1000 to nearly 3000 tons in dimensions. There is not now such a crowd of shipping as in former years, owing to the increased facilities for unloading. About three years ago, 600 square-rigged vessels are said to have claimed attendance at one time from the hungry colonists, whose markets continued drained of many articles, although a superabundance of these same articles reposed in a hundred hulls not five miles distant. There were now scarcely a hundred vessels in view, including the larger of the interco-

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lonial traders. From sixty to seventy were large ships from Britain and foreign ports.

We made for the east side of Port Phillip, in order to proceed by the south channel, where the water is deepest. By this channel our harbour master informs me he can bring up the "Great Eastern." It is ominous of the future that he has been already communicated with on the subject, and has promised to steer this mammoth boat, with her 10,000 souls, in safety to her anchorage off Williamstown. Passing within three or four miles of the eastern shores of the bay, we could observe some of the beauties of this locality, which are quite unseen in the distance of the broad waters when taking the other channels. Schnapper Point, between Mount Eliza and Mount Martha, shows an attractive vicinity of white sandy beaches and green and wooded hills. The great requirement of such places is a jetty for boats and small steamers. In this expensive colony, little can be done without such facilities. But, on the other hand, the facility of a jetty is not to be had without a great expense, and accordingly a good deal of importunity is brought to bear upon the Government and Legislature, in order to get the first to bring forward and the other to pass, a sum in the estimates sufficient for the purpose. Schnapper Point has been contending for her jetty, but as yet without success.

We have now cleared the sand-banks by our circuitous channel, and are entering the narrow passage by which the spacious and land-locked harbour com-

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municates with the ocean. The strong tide that rushes past us tells of the pressure upon the narrow opening, as the rising waters from without struggle to find their level inside the bay. These rushing tides are charged, at each succeeding rise, with the sand that is afterwards, in the still expanse inside, deposited over the banks through which we have been steering. The remarkable seething of the waters of this narrow entrance, which was noticed by the discoverers of this harbour in 1802, is due to the inequalities of the bottom, the channel having very variable depths in close approximation.

Port Phillip is naturally neither a safe nor a convenient harbour, although the ample revenues of Victoria are yearly tending to remove its defects. The lines of white foam on either side of the Heads, show where a dangerous reef of rocks runs from the respective shores towards the mid channel. In the broad light of day, and to those familiar with the place, danger is never dreamt of. The western reef runs from Point Lonsdale, and between the two there are two miles of deep water. But wrecks have occurred, nevertheless, even in the day-time; and this consideration induced the local government, four years ago, to establish an outer pilotage, in addition to the one inside, whose staff had hitherto been taking charge of the ships and levying the rates, after the vessels had, by their own guidance, surmounted the chief dangers. This outer pilotage was conducted by means of large decked boats, sufficient for the open sea, which, with their pilots, were always on the outlook for

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the various ships and flags that hourly streamed into this great commercial mart of the southern hemisphere.

One of these boats now approaches us about two miles beyond the Heads, to take back our pilot. The words, "Pilot No. 1," in ample characters on her sail, leave no doubt as to her purpose and vocation. We have now a pleasant view of Queenscliff, a village above the cliff that forms Shortland's Bluff, and behind the lighthouse of that promontory. This lighthouse is supplemented by a white tower lower down the eminence to the southward, and these two objects being in line, the arriving vessels are aware that they are in the right direction for the entrance.

Queenscliff is a very promising summer retreat for the busy traders of Melbourne; and I presume it is mainly from the absence of that great lion, the jetty, that it is not more patronised. A jetty, however, is at length being constructed; and if it can be so made as to permit of a passing call, going and returning, from all the steamers that now ply between Melbourne and the various surrounding colonies, we may soon realise a second Brighton or Margate. In summer, the change to this place from the heat and dust of Melbourne must be delightful; the cool breeze is borne direct from the open ocean: nor can solitude be complained of, where the narrow strait, as a public highway, wafts a dozen or a score of ships, as the daily contribution, respectively, to the outward and inward commerce of the place.

Geelong is conveniently situated as regards this

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pretty watering-place, and the people of that town, who have been for years in a mortal combat against the centralising tendencies of Melbourne, have several schemes for making it their own, as they are only eighteen miles from it, and their railway to Melbourne will shortly command the Queenscliff traffic. One of our passengers, and several friends from Geelong, came off to us while opposite Queenscliff.

We steam pleasantly along the coast towards Cape Otway. As we near the Cape, the outline is bold and lofty, and several bays and indentations display precipitous gorges in the mountain scenery. The whole is covered with forest. Exploration in this region of the country has hitherto met with little that is suitable to industry beyond timber, and but little of that is in situations available to present means of profitable transit. One of these indentations is Apollo Bay, with which some trade is carried on by a copartnery in Geelong. This business did not remunerate the first attempts; but perseverance has proved successful, and a large contract for sleepers for the Geelong and Melbourne Railway is now being executed by the Apollo Bay traders. Rumours of coal and other minerals being found in the Cape Otway territory are wafted occasionally to Melbourne from solitary adventurers who penetrate the recesses of the forest. A few patches of comparatively clear grass land have been found, and taken possession of as isolated pastoral stations. For the present the most conspicuous feature of civilisation is the lighthouse on the Cape, erected about eight years ago. It

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is a revolving light, and now, just as the night sets in, is right abreast of us.

Next morning we are off Portland, a name suggestive of the neglected outports and monopolising capitals of colonies. "Portland's rights and Portland's wrongs" have been an oft-repeated tale in the Victorian legislature. Portland has a fine harbour, but with one exposure — the south-easterly, which is rather a rough one on this coast; however, it seems agreed upon there that the wrecks that have occurred have all been through the gross negligence of the crews. We bid adieu to the land off Cape Bridgewater, with a glimpse of the unpretending coast line, trending northwards and westwards towards the busy hives of South Australian commerce, whose unknown realms had been peopled in the preceding century by Swift's nation of Lilliputians.

A hot wind was blowing off the land at the time we passed, and the considerable smoke of more than one bush-fire stretched forth for several miles from the land in our direction. Being less than twenty miles at sea, the breeze reached us still warm from its hot and dry journey on shore. The thermometer in shade at breakfast time stood at 72°, but every hour reduced its figures as we increased the range of water over which it came to us, until at length this marked feature of the climate of Southern Australia became indiscernible in a region of water. Steering in a direction a little north of west for King George's Sound, we pursued our course with favouring breezes across the expanse of the Great Australian Bight.

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CHAP. II.

WEST AUSTRALIA.

Hot North Winds and moist Southerly Breezes.— Hobson's Bay to Albany.— Pilot Boat manned with Natives.— Town of Albany.— Magnificent and odoriferous Shrubs.— Progress of the Colony.— Population.— Evils of Convictism.— Export of Wool.—Bush-track to Perth.—Sterile Country round Albany.— Swan River Settlement.— Large Oysters.— Aborigines and Half-castes.— "King Hardy."— Vines and Fig Trees.— Religious Tracts.

Our speed did not prove equal to the repute of the "Simla," and we were by degrees initiated into the secret that a lot of Welsh coal, sent by the Company from Cardiff to Sydney, had turned out of inferior quality. The quick outward passage from England gave credibility to the explanation. We had a thousand tons of these millstones on the ship's neck, and must mix them off, as best we could, with the contributions got at the ports of call. But we are blessed with winds, if not with coal, and have always been at nine knots at the least, with an occasional surprise of eleven. As the fifth day ends we come off the land of the Recherche archipelago, distant, perhaps, one hundred miles north of us. A gentle breeze from the north is blowing, which is probably a hot wind on shore and considerably

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stronger than we feel it; but it is wafted to us in fog and small rain. The temperature is pleasant, being 66° to 68° in the forenoon. Is this, then, the meteorology of our hot winds, which, after skimming the cool southern ocean, are replaced by reactionary southerly breezes charged with moisture, and giving us the familiar cold and wet off the ocean that succeeds the hot northerly blast? The difficulty of explanation lies with the many exceptions.

Leaving Hobson's Bay on Sunday, at 9 A.M., we were on Friday, at noon, 157 miles from Albany. At midnight we hove-to for daylight, starting again between four and five o'clock with a strong south-east wind, fog, rain, and a heavy sea. Land was soon in sight, bold high headlands and rugged rocky islands looming portentously through the haze. Mount Gardner mistily reared up to the north, Bald Head and Peak Head lay west of us, and Break Sea Island mid-channel. But our captain was chary of a coast he had never seen before, and kept a look-out for the Eclipse islands, which, however, were buried in fog. After rolling about till ten we stood in, found all right, and saw a pilot pushing out for us from the entrance to the inner harbour.

The pilot boat was manned by five natives, four of whom pulled the oars, and seemed well versed in the duties. The prompt retreat of the ladies brought more prominently to our notice that the "salvages" were stark naked, excepting a most inadequate and neglected attempt at covering about their middle.

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They had a reddish-brown hue, arising from the use of clay of that colour mixed with oil or fat, and the hair was thickly plastered with the same material.

The inner harbour is quite land-locked, with a narrow and rather intricate entrance. Buoys have been laid down, and a solitary pilot plies his rare vocation in this out-of-the-way region, whose population, prior to these occasional calls of the steamers to and from Eastern Australia, within the last four to five years, were almost as isolated and incommunicable as the Pitcairn islanders.

Notwithstanding the continued unfavourable weather, requiring great-coats in the midst of summer, in 35° of south latitude, the most of us were soon ashore by the aid of several licensed boats, at a charge of one shilling per head.

We stepped on a narrow rude jetty and were received at the shore by a number of natives, male and female. They were chiefly adults, with a few children. One mother was suckling her infant, which, from its usual rest in a sort of basket at her back, she brought forward under her left arm and, as it were, swung the opposite or right breast into the little creature's mouth, to which it fastened like a leech. We were momentarily besieged for sixpences, this being the standard coin, whether for donations, or remuneration for messages, or any work done.

The little town of Albany, situated on the northern side of the inner harbour, lies on a southern slope between two hills, that stand probably four hundred to six hundred feet in elevation. The houses, dotted here

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and there amongst the green landscape, give a pleasing effect from the water. The verdure, however, when one gets a closer view, is not that of grass and fertility, but of shrubs, and flowers resembling bushes, covering a soil of little better than sand. But it was impossible not to admire the magnificent shrubs through which we picked our way between the high-water mark and a sort of natural terrace above us, on which the scattered little town was built. The fragrance of these plants was delicious. Scarcely a leaf or flower could be touched but left its pleasant perfume on our fingers. A gorgeous bush, having the characters of a banksia, with bright red tufts near the tops of its branches, proceeding from the seed receptacles, carried off the palm in regard to appearance; while a sort of gigantic clematis, with a cream-coloured flower and thick, small, dark green leaves, transcended its fellows in the richness of its odour.

A boy upon the beach told us that the town had several stores, and one street, which we would reach on ascending the terrace. We all accordingly got into the latter, and several ladies adjourned to the former to replenish their stocks of boots and calicoes. Having been here nearly four years before, I now found the evidence of some progress. A quarter of a mile ahead of us stood the Chusan Hotel, a two-story edifice, which viewed from the steamer looked an imposing stone building, but which we now found to be a rude structure of Singapore timber. The monthly or semi-monthly visits of the steamers, since the discovery of the Australian

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gold-fields, had revivified the energies of the place. In such excited times, half-acre town allotments, in good sites, had reached the price of 70*l*. But these visits had been so fitful hitherto, that the people were uncertain how far to extend their establishments to meet the expected increase of business. The calls of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's vessels in 1853, induced mine host of the Chusan to import his large house from Singapore; but when it arrived the following year the mail service had been given up, and with it disappeared, of course, the business for the house. And I fear there is still the same uncertainty for the future; for an effective steam mail service must require the avoidance of the delays and dangers of this port. The postal requirements of Western Australia are not of a very urgent character; the mail from Sydney consisting of twenty-two letters and sixty newspapers, while that from Melbourne had no letters, and but thirty-three papers.

We sallied forth for a walk to the top of the western hill, and were once more threading our way through the mazes of odoriferous shrubs, mixed with neglected and overgrown geraniums of European importation. I was beginning to speculate why a manufactory of perfumes and essences should not succeed here. The bad weather drove us back after a short walk, and I regretted not to have had time to visit other subjects of interest, such as the residence of the late Sir R. and Lady Spencer, who, with a large family, had long resided in this neighbourhood upon their large grant of

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land in the early days of the settlement; and also the ten or twelve aboriginal children, who are humanely trained and educated by the Resident and his lady.

Albany contains about 350 inhabitants, and the whole district, called Plantagenet, about 800. This population includes a considerable proportion of ticket-of- leave andconditional-pardon men — a phraseology familiar to penal colonies. About eighty of this class, chiefly of the latter section, were stated to reside in Albany, and the men who aided in coaling our steamer were mostly or entirely these convicts. Western Australia, some years since, volunteered herself as a penal settlement for British criminals. If we could regard this as a martyrising movement of loyal colonists to relieve our perplexed mother just at the critical moment when Eastern Australia closed the door to further convictism, the sacrifice surpasses even that of Curtius for the cause of Rome; for husbands and parents invite to their own homes the dangers and vices of humanity that another country is horrified to retain, although arising within and pertaining to its own society.

The Swan River colonists, tired of the dull pace given by their own limited resources, invited the convicts for the sake of the imperial expenditure and the labour power of the criminals. A material impetus was forthwith given to the settlement. But several years afterwards I recollect reading of something very like fits of repentance on the part of the colonists. When the receiving of convicts was first discussed, the bulk of

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the people had not given the subject much attention, and its merits were settled chiefly by some leading residents and employers of labour. The colonists had soon to experience that criminals could not live amongst them without crimes; for a robbery in one place, a murder in another, and outrages worse than death somewhere else, introduced striking and unwelcome features in their previously quiet and recluse existence.

The smallness of the isolated community of Albany prevented many of the evils of convictism. Whilst on the one hand the scanty riches of the place held out no temptation, on the other escape was impossible, excepting into the bush to perish. All knew each other, and vice lay under a sort of paralysis from the absence of motive. This state of affairs was no doubt experienced in the earlier stages of our penal colonies system, and helped to fortify the mistake of the transportation practice, through whose fatal facilities England has alike neglected the vast means at her command for the prevention of crime at home, and has reared up the scenes of a modern Sodom to blot the fair face of Australia. The determined resistance of the evil has happily ended in arresting any further transportation to South-eastern Australia, and this will eventually clear the country of its stain. For long years to come, however, the criminal calendar and the penal estimates in the public finances will continue to attest the social suffering and pecuniary cost of the system to these colonies; while numbers of British outcasts, who still linger on the soil of their expatriation, are marking

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their existence by a track of blood and desolation through our colonial societies.

We set ourselves to inquire how the people lived, and what backbone of commerce had supported the place prior to the providential calls of the steamers. We traced this to an export of wool, of which article 270 bales were in the town at the time of our visit. This seemed to be the year's clip, and as the bales were unusually large, the lot might be worth 7000*l.* The country being poor, the pastoral stations are remote and isolated, and the getting of the wool to town may be called drawback number one. But a greater difficulty is to find the chance of getting the wool to England. By a small vessel which had lately called on speculation from Melbourne, and supplied the community with some spirits and other stores, it had been arranged to ship 70 bales by the way of Batavia. The remaining 200 belonged to one trader, and as he wished them shipped in one lot, and this vessel could not take all, he preferred holding for another chance. The freight agreed to for the 70 bales was 2¼*d.* per lb. to London in full, the ship forwarding at her own cost (such is our concise mercantile language) from Java to Europe.

From the summit of the adjacent hill we traced the tiny bush track conducting in a north-westerly direction to Perth, Swan River, on the western coast, which is the capital town of the colony. It was lost on the horizon of a wide expanse of scrub and sterility. The distance to Perth is 270 miles, and the nearest pastoral

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station on the way is 40 miles; that is to say, there is no intermediate tract for 40 miles fit even for sheep pasture. In a neighbouring direction, however, that of the Hay River, small squatting stations are reached at 28 miles; and a stout elderly Scotchman who flourished in that locality, and had come to Albany to sell a few fat sheep, gave us a very contented picture of his quiet and monotonous existence. Besides the sterility of soil, the country for many miles round Albany was additionally inhospitable from the growth of a particular herb which was poisonous to the live stock, and particularly destructive to cattle.

The colony of West Australia, or the Swan River Settlement, as it is often called, is now of comparatively old date, and is some years anterior to those two colonies on the south-east, whose progress has been so much more conspicuous, Victoria and South Australia. The country was first colonised in 1829, on which occasion the British Government acted on the plan of making large grants of land to persons of social position possessing means and proposing to become residents. One of these grantees was Sir R. Spencer, whose location was contiguous to Albany, and whose widow and large family continued many years in this outlandish region; Lady Spencer having died only the year before our visit. Albany, I was told, was first selected as the seat of government, probably, on account of its fine harbour; but a removal took place afterwards to the banks of the Swan, on which side of the country the great proportion of whatever is available is situated.

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The colony made a poor progress until aided several years ago by the British convict establishments; which have at all events increased the statistical figures, and, no doubt, also the wealth of the place. From Returns before me for 1855, I observe that the population was 13,838, the exports 46,314*l.*, the imports 105,320*l.*, the number of acres under cultivation 14,693. Of live stock there were 4887 horses, 21,073 head of cattle, and 184,134 sheep. And the cause of progress is so far indicated, that these figures show generally an increase of from five to forty per cent. upon those of the previous year. We must attribute this new life to the convict influx. I shall leave to the reader the further discussion as to whether the colony has been benefited or otherwise by the change.

We had a substantial dinner at the Chusan, including very large oysters procured from a shallow inlet running north from the outer harbour, and for which this place begins to get a name. Some of our company, indeed, were rampant to begin upon the oysters; but we did not all relish their huge dimensions and either their real or imagined coarseness. They reminded me of the New York oysters, though not quite so large as those mammoths of the oyster world.

After dinner we amused ourselves with the aborigines, many of whom had assembled at the door to attract our attention and extort a few sixpences. These natives have a general resemblance to those of the eastern coast, but have not the stout-built frames that I recollect of our Victorian blacks before our merciless

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civilisation had dispersed and extinguished them. It was pleasant to observe, however, that they all appeared free from loathsome disease, being in this respect unlike their unfortunate countrymen in the other settlements. There was nothing in the least approaching to beauty, male or female, among the group before us. The want of fulness to the forms of the youth of either sex, and particularly of calf to the leg, militated sadly against English notions of the human form divine. I should mention one exception, a young girl probably of fourteen years; but she was evidently a half-caste, as her lighter complexion and comparatively handsome figure indicated. Her face was pleasing and even pretty, and she seemed not unconscious of her superiorities, taking a prominent part in noisy importunity with the others.

These half-caste children seemed no rare feature in this place, as we saw at least ten or twelve in the course of our walks. Several had attained to fifteen or twenty years of age; and one nice-looking girl, in English attire, appeared at the door of a cottage as we passed. While about one-half of those we saw had been left wild with the tribe, the others were living in civilised fashion, taken charge of either by their white fathers, or by others who felt an interest in them. They were generally of pleasing appearance, if not actually handsome.

The colonists make some use of the natives in taking messages, and in driving sheep or cattle to or from the interior. For these simple but useful duties they seem

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to be entirely depended on. The common remuneration seems to be sixpence. One man who got a shilling for carrying a box of fruit for us was especially grateful. One of the men was called King Hardy, and appeared to hold some authority. He seemed to understand and appreciate the equality of our laws, for when we joked him about white fellow putting black fellow in prison, he answered, after his own roundabout mode, that black fellow did not go to prison if he behaved himself, and that both black and white went there if they did not.

We returned on board through our beautiful botanical garden, to the less pleasing spectacle of a ship full of coal-dust from the operation of coaling. Next morning some supplies arrived in the shape of several sheep and fowls, with a hamper or two of grapes. The vines and fig trees grow most luxuriantly. The figs were not ripe, and the climate is so cool that the grapes were only just getting ready even at this advanced period of summer, namely, 21st of February, answering to August of the northern hemisphere. The price of the grapes was fourpence to sixpence per pound, according to quality; peaches were one penny to twopence each; cucumbers when they found customers were sixpence. The varieties were very limited, as we saw only two kinds of grapes, the common white sweet water, and the white muscat, while the peaches seemed all of the late, thick-skinned and pointed kind, which we concluded had been from ungrafted trees, although the gardener stoutly denied this conclusion.

Our pilot before leaving us received a small parcel of

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religious tracts, and I had previously observed that on each recurring Sunday on board, our tables were well supplied with these publications; a circumstance affording a pleasing evidence of the zeal of our home societies in disseminating, even to the furthest ends of the earth, the means and inducements to religion. The religious ministrations of the little community we were leaving appeared, however, to rest on a very precarious basis, for although we perceived a good stone church in the upper part of the township, the clergyman had died six or nine months previously, and none had, as yet, come into his place. In the meantime the resident was in the habit of reading prayers each Sunday.

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CHAP. III.

CEYLON.

Change of Temperature. — Flying Fish and Whales. — Spicy Breezes. — Cingalese Boats. — Alarm for the missing "Oneida." — "Open" Sleeping Apartments. — Crowds of Cingalese. — Aspects of the Streets of Galle. — Toads and Fire-Flies. — Cocoa-Tree Forest. — Cocoa-nut and Fibre. — The Cinnamon Gardens. — Idols and Pictures in a Pagoda. — Trinkets and Nick-nacks in Ivory and Tortoise-shell. — Hints to Voyagers visiting Ceylon. — Fruits and Seasons of Galle. — Milk of Cocoa-nuts and Cows. — Harbour and Commerce. — Coffee and other Products. — Population, Climate, and People. — Elephants in the Cocoa Forests. — Captain Harris the Elephant Slayer.

We did not round "the Leuwin" without the customary storm, but a perfectly calm morning succeeded, and surprised us by the high temperature, the thermometer standing at 75° in the shade during the day. Next day we had a stiff southerly breeze, which was not distinguished afterwards from the south-east trades, although these are not usually met with quite so far south. However we lost them as much too soon to the north, for they failed us at about 12° south latitude. While these winds blew we had pleasant cool weather, but now the thermometer took a start from 75° or 78°, where the trades left it, up to 84°, and on some occasions a little higher, which made us cast off the still

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lingering woollens and mount the lighter habiliments suited to the tropics. The difference at night would not exceed 3° or 4°, so that we were glad of open ports and the lightest possible bed-clothing.

The flying-fish became numerous after we had passed the tropical line. They seemed of a smaller size than those of the Atlantic. We had a refutation of the common notion that these fish fly only in straight lines. They may do so when in shoals, but we observed individuals or small straggling parties winding about in order to course along the wave hollows. We observed no other fish till upon nearing Ceylon, when, from the beautiful blue expanse, which was just frosted by the gentle breeze, we observed some of the larger kind jump into the air, and several bottlenosed whales spouting forth water. Our course had been very slow, in spite of the favouring gales, occupying nearly 15½ days from King George's Sound, the distance being 3400 nautical miles. In calms we had dropped to 7½ knots. The coals again! We understood, however, that an accumulation of barnacles, &c., got in Sydney Harbour and elsewhere, were also lending their detaining influences.

The summits of the broken land of southern Ceylon, rounded in distance, were visible more than fifty miles off, and we all crowded on deck to inhale the spicy breezes of this far-famed country. Our cow was said to be snuffing, and the sheep to be edging their heads, as if the wind brought something to think about. But I cannot say that my own senses identified any cinna-

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mon, camphor, or lemon savours. This temporary loss was abundantly made good when we got ashore.

The pilot boat gave us the first specimen of the odd-looking boats that are in use here. The hollowed trunk of a tree, some twenty feet in length, has its sides continued upwards by boards, to give a total depth of three feet. The breadth seemed to my eyes less than twelve inches, and admitted only the legs of passengers, the bodies resting on boards thrown across the top of the boat. But the curious part is yet to be described, namely, a log nearly as long as the boat, floating parallel to it at one side, and attached by two stout bamboo stems, each a dozen feet in length, proceeding from the boat to the log. There is here a double purpose of a breakwater for waves, and a leverage to enable the boat to carry sails; so that this fantastic boat, which by itself would be quite useless, can thus bear up to the strongest winds and waves. These boats, along with some others of more English appearance, swarmed round as we came to anchor; their eager and nimble crews, half-naked, and often all but entirely so, making all sorts of antics to induce the passengers to patronise their respective boats. "Honi soit qui mal y pense." Custom is second nature, and necessity has no law: so thought all of us, ladies as well as others, and retreating steps and nervous shocks soon alike disappeared.

A shock of another kind, however, we did receive as soon as the pilot reached us; for he communicated the alarming fact that the preceding steamer, the "Oneida,"

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had not come forward, nor had she been heard of. This news caused us most serious alarm, as it was generally known, although not publicly circulated in Australia, that this steamer has caught fire more than once on the outward passage. She had made an excellent voyage to the Sound from Melbourne, and took her departure three weeks before ourselves; but where she now was in the wide waters of the Indian Ocean was the problem that revolved in our minds. There is a faint hope of meeting her at Aden. Some suppose that if the machinery had become unworkable she might have sailed to Mauritius. The agent, who came on board at Galle, is impressed that she has turned south to catch the westerly winds and make again for Sydney, where the machinery, if out of order, could probably be repaired. Nearly all of us have intimate friends and fellow-colonists on board.

The sun was just setting when the anchor was let go, but a glorious moon was already on the horizon, and the shore looked so inviting that nearly all were on the wing. Some of us, who had ladies in our party, joined together and sent at once to secure good accommodations. The pioneering party generally brings all the others, so that when we reached the "New Mansion House" at Galle, two thirds of the passengers mustered at the tea-table. We had soon reason to be glad of our clubbing precautions, when on ascending to our bed-rooms we found that the lofty and spacious apartments were open in the widest sense of the word, not only to the external breeze, but that the rooms were separated

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merely by a low skeleton framework six and a half feet high, and covered over merely by a sheet of yellow calico. To do at Rome as Rome does we found, after all, to be easy enough. The married folks took their ground together, and their night's rest was far more disturbed by the heat of the weather than the novelty of their bed-room fashions. The main danger here is of a totally different kind from curiosity or impertinence. The adroit natives, with their gentle faces and lustrous but cunning eyes, nimble as mice and equally timid, are ever prowling about to snatch up money or small valuables; and even a lady, who descries in the moonlight the dusky form of a Cingalese in her bed-room, soon learns to be far more concerned about the safety of her jewels than the danger to her modesty.

To one who arrives here from Australia, the first impression is very apt to arise from contemplating the mass of black heads, supple limbs, and ready hands that are all at your service for anything you like to give. They buzz around you like a cloud of flies, and by a wave of your arm are as readily dispersed, although only for the same passing instant. What a host of labour power, offering almost for nothing! We learned the wages of one class, the punka drivers, who fan the apartments while the guests are at meat or otherwise occupied,—one pound a year. The prices of many articles on which almost endless labour had been bestowed, told me how little sufficed to support the numerous population of this island. I do not mean the prices they ask of passing travellers for these articles,—

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such as carved ebony boxes and tortoise-shell ornaments, — but those allowed by local dealers to the first manufacturer.

The bright moonlight allowed us to see the aspect of the houses as we passed through the town to our hotel. The streets are narrow and winding, with houses continued in the taste of the old Dutch residents; that is, with ample verandahs and spacious lofty rooms, through whose wide and ever open doors and windows the breezes blow freely in and out. The buildings are substantial as to verandah pillars and thickness of walls, but the rudeness of the interior finish gives a ricketty effect to an English mind. I should say, too, that there was a ricketty reality, for the morning gun, that daily arouses the inhabitants at five o'clock, shook the mansion like an earthquake. The roofs were double or treble covered with tiles, which gave them a very clumsy aspect, enhanced by the mould of age upon many of them, but I dare say they resisted the rays of the fierce vertical sun.

After tea, at which, amongst pine-apples, bananas, and oranges, the actual tea had but little to say, we sallied out for a walk, tempted by the brightness of the evening. A couple of hundred yards brought us to an open grassy space with a line of shady trees, beyond which were the ramparts. Walking towards these formidable-looking walls over the grass, we could scarcely avoid treading upon the numerous toads that hopped at our feet. The fire-flies, which are very numerous here, were a further curiosity. We were

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meandering over what seemed to us a needlessly solid portion of the wall, when a soldier warned us off, as we were upon the top of the powder magazine. The arctic woollen suit in which he was clad recalled *Punch's* pictures of the Crimean troops, loaded with chests of drawers, and choking within straight and arctic clothing. We were told they were permitted light clothes during the day. But the evening temperature as we walked could not have been under 82°. We heard some music in the private houses on our return. The natural instrument was much more effective than the artificial — the lady than her piano. Either the climate, or the finances, or perhaps both, are opposed to good instruments, which accordingly are very scarce in Galle.

The soft murmur of the waves outside the walls was pleasant to the ear. We looked out upon the expanse of the Southern and Western Ocean in common with a number of other interested eyes, for the semi-monthly mail from England was just due, and the steamer's signal hourly expected.

Our stay at Ceylon was limited to the next day; for while we were leisurely enjoying ourselves ashore, some fifty or a hundred poor natives, covered with sweat and coal-dust, had been toiling all night to replenish our fuel. In less than twenty-four hours upwards of five hundred tons had been put on board, by means of barges from the shore. The unpleasantness of the coal-dust had been one cause of driving so many of us on shore immediately on our arrival, for the work

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of coaling proceeds on the earliest possible instant after the anchor is down.

There are two chief objects at Galle to passengers; one is to see several places in the neighbourhood, the other to purchase the curious and novel productions and fabrics of the place. We resolved to take the cool of the morning for the first, and, after a rather sleepless night,—disturbed a great deal by the heat of the weather, and slightly by a few mosquitoes, which we preferred to endure rather than enclose ourselves in the very slightest of curtains,—we found ourselves, at sunrise, on the way to the Cinnamon Gardens.

We had a sort of covered hackney carriage that held four, and was drawn by one small hardy horse, that cantered briskly along at seven or eight miles an hour. We cleared the town by the large archway near the wharf that we had passed through the night before, and we now observed the substantial wall by which Galle is surrounded. Our road lay through a level grass park, which seemed to be largely used for washing or drying clothes. We presently entered the cocoa-nut forest, with which the wild part of the country is covered, down even to the water's edge; the little rocks off shore having sometimes their one or two, or a dozen cocoa trees. Near the town here, the forest, which was rather open, being probably maintained so, was carpeted with a coarse grass, which the small buffalo-looking cattle constantly cropped. The edges of the road were copiously lined with a creeper having a large lilac-coloured convolvulus flower. We passed

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various other flowers, some of which had a fragrance stronger than even those of West Australia.

The country teemed with inhabitants, as we drove along upon a good and level made-road, whose either side was considerably shaded by the forest from the ascending sun. We had a cottage every few yards, and innumerable young children, who testified that the aborigines here, unlike those of Australia, were not expiring before the white man. In climates unsuited to the European constitution, and where the native labourer is wanted, the aborigines will still flourish; their dense masses resisting much of the debasing effect upon them by the presence of a race which even they themselves believe to be the superior. The cottages were generally very simple structures of stone and plaster, or of mud and twigs, with a few of more pretension, more or less approaching the town style. Fruits and grain were being sold in some, but most contained the cocoa fibre in various stages up to the perfect cordage. In this part of the island the cocoa fibre is the great staple, and gives employment to large numbers. The clothing was of light cotton fabric, rather bright in pattern. Those who had hard work were naked above the waist, and children under seven or eight years did not trouble themselves with anything. Their twinkling black eyes, comical faces, and round bellies, gave us plenty of amusement.

Our eyes revelled in the sight of innumerable cocoa-nuts. The lands on either side of the road appeared to be all private property, although there was no fencing

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or boundary mark of any kind that we could see. Notwithstanding the abundance of the cocoa and its fruit, precaution was taken to prevent theft. This consisted in tying round the stem, by successive knots, one of its long branching leaves, which, becoming dry in the sun, will emit a considerable crackling noise should any stealthy foot attempt the tree. There is more than one kind of cocoa-nut-tree. We were told of three. The common one gives the palm oil for which Ceylon is famous, and which is used in lamps for lighting all the houses; another, called the King Cocoa, gives a fine oil, which is used for the toilet.

We had taken the Colombo road, and, after four miles or so, we turned off on the right to the Cinnamon Gardens. Here there is little to see beyond the cinnamon plant and a few others of the country. Everything you touch is spicy. The cinnamon-root gives the camphor; the nutmeg-tree gives also the mace, which is a crimson filagree overspreading the shell of the nutmeg within the fleshy pulp that envelops both. We purchased some curiosities, such as elephants' teeth cut into fancy pieces, and partook of some oranges and bananas. A fine river coursed past the gardens, and a boat stood ready in which we might have gone twenty or thirty miles into the interior, but our limited time sent us back to town, where the ladies had schemes of large purchases of curiosities.

On our return, we visited a pagoda situated upon a rising ground, a little to the left, off the road. Followed as usual by a troop of boys, we afforded our

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attendants great amusement by picking off the trees some large snails, whose bright crimson lips gave their shells a value in our eyes. The temple was small, but well filled with images and paintings. First, was a colossal figure of Buddha, sitting in cross-legged fashion, and, on either side, smaller erect figures of his two sons. Near this group also was a large painted figure of Vishnu. These figures were behind a veil or curtain, and within an inner edifice, between which and the outer walls was a sort of quadrangular gallery full of pictures.

These pictures were ranged in horizontal layers or lines, from roof to floor, like large lettering on the page of a great book; and it was not difficult to see, with our Mexican, Egyptian, and Assyrian experience, that the pictures represented histories. The grand drift of all seemed to be to illustrate the power of their priests and kings in this world, and of their gods in the next, and the awful retributions for those who did not obey them. One scene would represent a king before whom a subject had been impaled alive; while another had him in the next world in realms of fire, where huge worms fastened on his limbs, and demons thrust torturing irons into his most vital parts. The natives seemed familiarised with these revolting scenes; for although their faces were grave when they saw ours so, yet they would laugh as readily as any of our party at the whole affair. The collection at the door was duly made.

As we took our departure, we observed several

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persons preparing a sort of papyrus leaf, upon which the priests transcribe their sacred writings. When I was here four years previously, an old man showed me the most ancient of the writings, with whose neatness as well as distinctness I was quite surprised. Of course I could as little believe in the reputed, as guess at the real, antiquity of these documents.

Our party had intended visiting a second place, reputed as better worth seeing, and about the same distance off, in another direction. This was on the way to some plantations about eight miles off. About four miles and a half of the distance is done by carriage, the remainder by boat; but for this latter you require to give about a day's notice to have a boat in waiting, the distance from Galle by water being very circuitous. Some of the passengers took this direction instead of ours, and gave us rather a glowing description on their return, with their hands and baskets well filled with large and beautiful flowers and shrubs. We could not, however, disentangle ourselves from the business of selecting and bargaining for the host of curious fabrics offered to us by the natives. We had here got into the midst of the most noisy and animated scenes imaginable. A mass of brown faces crowded round the door of the hotel, eagerly calling for purchasers of their various wares, while some privileged individuals had got inside, and were carrying on a quieter but surer game. These articles are chiefly the following: — Chains of a particular make, and rings set with the precious stones of the island; elephants' teeth, cut into great varieties of form; bracelets, chains, and

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other ornaments in tortoise-shell; elaborately-carved boxes, figures of elephants, and other articles in the hard ebony wood of the country.

All these things are marvellously cheap, if the visitor be on his guard, and get some good directions as to how and what to buy. But this is the difficulty; for all are leagued against his pocket, from the hotel servants downwards to the noisy dealers. The Australians, with pockets fresh from the gold-fields, were looked upon as dead game; and, indeed, with our notions of the value of labour, we are apt to think all those nicknacks cheap even at the prices first asked; for, like the Chinese curiosities, most of them carry the evidence of having been born out of protracted labours. The carving of the larger ebony workboxes, for instance, is understood to employ a man for three or four months: for these boxes they ask 4*l.* or 5*l.*, and will probably let them go at 3*l.*, unless the stream of passengers be unusually large, and hopes proportionately high. We were rather fortunate in this respect, as there had been a great gathering of articles against the expected arrival of the Australian steamers; which, it was thought, would bring at least a hundred passengers each, instead of the very different result we have seen between the first two of the line.

I offer a few directions from the experience of two visits. In the first place, do not miss the cool of the morning for sight-seeing in the country. Start at daybreak, and ere you are well out of the little town it

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will be quite light in this land of perpendicular sunrise and sunset. An hour or so before dark may be reserved for seeing the town and fortifications: during the heat of the day you may sit at ease in the hotel reception-room, and enjoy the lively scene of bargaining that goes on at the door. The rule as to purchasing is to reject everything of metallic manufacture, particularly the so-called gold rings, and other trumpery with which our travellers are incessantly deceived, and to keep to what is strictly and wholly native, such as the articles in tortoise-shell, ebony, and coromandel-wood, elephants' teeth, porcupine quills, and so forth.

"Native diamonds," and native this and that in the precious-stone way, are plentifully offered, and to be had for the smallest coin, although twenty pounds or more may have been first asked. But the difficulty is to know what is really of Ceylon, and therefore suitable as a memento of local production, and what is simply of "Brummagem," and suitable only to exemplify imposition. These stones look well in rings, and high prices are thus got for the merest rubbish. A passenger of our party, who took a fancy to one of these rings, was first asked three pounds, but after a protracted haggling he secured his object for one shilling!

The gold is not the only spurious article of these native pedlars; the tortoise-shell articles labour under a strong suspicion, the buffalo-horn being cheaper and not dissimilar. The dark shell of the body is diversified with the lighter hue of articles made from the claws, which, as being procurable in less quantity, are much

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the dearer of the two kinds, although in reality the least attractive in appearance.

The fruits to be enjoyed here at the time of our visit were the pine-apple and banana, which were in perfection, and the oranges, which seem to be creatures of every season, but rather repulsive at first from their very green and unripe appearance; they are soon, however, preferred to all other fruits. The mango and delicious mangostine were not ready.

The seasons here would puzzle the stranger, for although Galle is in 6° of north latitude, I found March of my present visit to be hotter than May of my previous one. The explanation is that the ocean breezes from the south, on which Galle depends for tempering its climate, come cooler over the land when the sun is in the northern tropic, than when, as at present, the vertical luminary brooded over the Indian waters. Of a winter night, which I suppose occurs somewhere about mid-year, the thermometer will go as low as 65°.

That great marvel of schoolboys, the milk of young cocoa-nuts, is one of the things to be seen and tasted. Its qualities are matter of taste; for my part, one small sip was sufficient, surrounded as we were by other attractions. I should remark that the cows' milk had a peculiar earthy flavour; derived, I suppose, from the herbs or roots on which the animals feed.

After twenty-four hours of pleasant and incessant variety, which we would have willingly prolonged, we bundled up to set off to the steamer, whose blowing steam already told of departing preparations. I had

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now leisure to survey the scenery, and to make inquiries regarding the country. The harbour is exposed to a swell from the south, and has but four fathoms at the anchorage. I remarked a great increase of vessels in the port as compared with the appearance four years before; most of them had arrived for instructions. This is, of course, the first form of the enlarging commerce of Galle that must result from these steam postal communications. But by and by the articles of export must find their way to this port, where so many chances of cheap freight to any part of the world will be offering. Galle is already the principal locality of the coir manufacture, in which there is now a large trade to Australia. The trade in Ceylon coffee to Australia is also large and increasing. It is all at present conducted through Columbo, the commercial capital of the island, a large town of 60,000 inhabitants on the western coast, seventy-three miles from Galle. The latter place contains only 3000 to 4000, including only about thirty English, with a mingled remnant of Dutch and Portuguese descent, mixed races and aboriginal natives.

The Portuguese first occupied Galle during their earlier East-Indian discoveries. After between one and two centuries the Dutch came into possession, and finally the English in 1796. The whole island has formed a British colony since the year 1815, and in a commercial view is one of the finest and most promising of our Empire. The recent coffee planting, which ruined so many of our young English colonists a few years ago, is now the mainstay of the country. The fine "Plan-

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tation" coffee, so called in distinction from the inferior "native" coffee, just as garden fruits would be distinguished from those wild or comparatively neglected, already forms an article of large export. The quantity exported in 1855 was 135,579 cwts., and in 1856 it had increased to 163,340 cwts., of which the Plantation proportion was 90,280 cwts., and the Native 70,060. We have thus above 8000 tons of coffee recently added to the world's supplies, and helping to throw a cup of comfort into gradations of our society lower than have been hitherto reached by this pleasant beverage.

I am chiefly interested, of course, in the Australian trade with this island, which promises to be very large, as it is now greatly on the increase. Several cargoes have gone to Melbourne during last year, to good advantage. The articles mostly wanted are coffee (both plantation and native) and coir fibre, which is very largely used for bedding and furniture in Victoria. Cinnamon, cocoa-nut oil, and coir rope are used to a less extent. The tables and other plain furniture that are made by the natives so cheaply from the jack-wood, should find profitable sale at Melbourne if the good old English taste regarding style of manufacture be adhered to. Sugar and rum are also products of this island; but neither article has yet risen, either in quantity or quality, to the status of an export.

Ceylon contains about a million and three quarters of inhabitants. The climate, although so uniformly warm in the lower seats of population, is yet as cold as the body can well bear upon the high hills of the

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interior. The aborigines are active, handsome, and even robust in a degree sufficient for general industry and usefulness; but the waste of climate is conspicuous upon the long-resident European, and in particular the English, whose white dress, white face, and white folder to protect the head from the sun, give the effect of the dead rather than the living.

As the gum-tree forest is a prevailing feature of Australia, so we have the cocoa-nut forest of Ceylon, which overspreads the country and marks the coast outline even to the water's edge. The depths of these cocoa forests resound to the roar of the wild elephant, whose numbers even yet, notwithstanding the annual slaughter of the hunt, are said to be considerable. Some idea of these numbers may be formed, as well as of the excitement of the chase in this country, from what I was told of the doings of a single hunter —a distinguished one, no doubt— namely, the late adventurous Captain Harris, who is said to have killed with his own hand in this island 1400 elephants in all, and as many as seventy in a single day.

Reflecting on these particulars of an interesting country, now one of the arteries of our great empire, we had weighed anchor, and at 10 P. M., in a serene and bright moonlight, with the aid of several lights planted in boats despatched for the purpose, we had cleared the rocky shoals of the harbour entrance, and were stretching away on the placid waters to the far west.

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CHAP. IV.

ADEN.

Temperature on the Indian Ocean.—Monotony of the Scene at Sea.—Cape Guardafui.—In sight of Aden.—Alarm of Small-pox.—Tidings of the "Oneida."—Piles of Coals.—Inner Harbour and Jetty.—Progress of Aden.—Coral burnt for Lime.—Commerce with Mokha and Africa.—Africans and Hindoos.—Corpulence of Parsees.—Town of Aden.—Huge volcanic Rocks.—Wells and Water-skin Buckets, and Pig-skin Bottles.—Remains of Ancient Water-tanks.—Their Construction.—Population of Aden.—Arab Dwellings.—Houses and Shops.—Hostile Spirit of the Arabs.—Jew Money-changers.—Estimation of the British "Sovereign."—Plain of Arabia.—Sheep and Cattle.—Island of Perim.

THE temperature upon the Indian Ocean, on a course so near as ours was to the equator, was lower than I had anticipated. With a temperature under 80° and some breath of breeze a passenger feels very comfortable at sea. The temperature gradually fell as we distanced Ceylon, until about mid seas, when, from a range of 80° to 85°, it went down to 78° at night, and did not exceed 79° or 80° in the daytime. I allude to true shade temperatures, which are not got best where the ship's thermometer is usually placed. The indraught of your berth port is better suited for accuracy. We may as well remember, however, that while a hot

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and nearly vertical sun is overhead it is a very difficult matter, even with the aid of a thick awning, for passengers to secure the enjoyment of the true shade temperature. The temperature in which they actually live is commonly that indicated by the ship's thermometer under the companion. Its indications are therefore a true representative of one sort.

The season of the year was favourable, both as regarded coolness and the absence of storms. In less than two months those waters on whose tranquil surface we were pleasantly sailing would be lashed into such fury by the monsoon, that, as occurred on my previous voyage in these parts, our steamers will avoid them by a detour to the south. We took the eight degrees passage through the Laccadives' Archipelago, but as we passed at night we were disappointed of a view of any of the members of this coralline world. The voyage is otherwise one of monotony, almost unrelieved by a single object beyond the heavens above and the waters below us. Only when land was within sight range would a solitary bird or two course near us, and a small flying-fish was the only other variety.

Glancing from the little port on one of our usual tranquil forenoons, I observed the horizon furrowed by irregularities that gave the impression of land. The sea was calm, excepting a slight breeze that rippled its surface, and brought out the expanse below in a fine dark relief from the bright surmounting sky. But there was presently detected a long gentle swell, whose passing hollows had caught my eye. It was the undu-

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lation of this ocean life that formed the deceptive object of attention, for the swell was quite visible upon that limited horizon commanded by the eye when directed from the low elevation of the cabin port. What would be deemed trifles amongst the world of objects ashore are noticeable in the comparative blank of sea life. I stood for a time, contemplating with interest those unconscious waves as they successively coursed onwards to far off space, fulfilling a purpose in their everlasting but unwearied journey.

We duly sighted the high cragged land of Socotra, some sixty miles to the north of us, and were preparing ourselves for a considerable rise in the thermometer as we entered the Gulf of Aden, between the parched jaws of Africa and Arabia. In this, however, we were agreeably mistaken, for a smart breeze from the north-west having sprung up, we had cooler weather than before, the thermometer falling to 75° at daybreak, and not exceeding 77½° during the day.

Cape Guardafui is a fitting representative of African desolation. It is bold and lofty, however, and forms a fine relieving object in the world of waters. There is a sort of false cape about ten miles to the south, which, although less lofty, and otherwise differing enough during broad daylight, was yet mistaken on one occasion during night for the northern promontory,—a mistake that nearly caused the destruction of a fine steamer, and the possible loss of her company on this inhospitable coast. This was the "Hindostan," belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, which, on

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the supposition that the cape had been rounded, was held on her way, till the bump upon a rock near the shore told in alarming notes the true state of the case. The vessel floated over this obstacle, and eventually got away.

After a passage of ten days we expected to make Aden an hour before midnight. As it is a lofty, rugged, dark mass of rock, all eyes were at work to see it loom upon the horizon. The night was not clear, so that we were within ten miles ere we could be satisfied of our object. As we approached, the stately proportions became more appreciable. We dared not venture in, however, although the light floated a few miles ahead of us. Our guns had not succeeded in arousing the pilot from his slumbers, and so we cruised about till daybreak.

We had looked for some difficulties connected with quarantine at Aden, as we learned at Ceylon that on board of a preceding steamer the smallpox had broken out, and that the captain had been landed at this port in a dangerous way from the disease. Of course we imagined that he had died, after infecting every attendant, that all communication with the shore must be interdicted, and that withal we might be thankful if we escaped a fortnight's quarantine at Suez. There is really great alarm in these parts of the world even about smallpox, which makes sad havoc, as well as every other infectious disorder, among the dirty and ill-ventilated domiciles of these Moslems. Our fears, however, were vain, for the captain had recovered, and

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the whole affair had blown over without any other case. Another trouble had a less auspicious appearance. The "Oneida" had not arrived at Aden, nor had she been heard of at the Mauritius, from which colony a French steamer had arrived a few days previously, and was just returning as we approached the harbour. Our chief hope now lies in the chance of her having returned to Sydney; although still, as regards Mauritius, she could scarcely have got there when the steamer left, had there been any accident to her machinery.

The alarm for this steamer was fortunately groundless. She had broken the shaft of her screw propeller, and returned to King George's Sound, where, leaving her passengers for the steamer "European," which succeeded the "Simla" the following month, she returned to Sydney. She reached the Sound only thirty-six hours after the "Simla" had sailed, the steamers passing during night near the Leuwin. So great was the alarm felt for her fate that, just prior to the arrival of the "European's" mails, forty guineas per cent. of premium was said to have been paid for insurance on her cargo.

We passed an East India Company's man-of-war of sixteen guns moored in the harbour, and dropped anchor near a ship discharging coals. Another three-master lay hard by, and both within the harbour and over the outside waters were numerous native boats and small traders. Extensive constructions seemed to be going on over various parts of the rocky peninsula, chiefly fortifications and military quarters. There was

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evidence everywhere of great progress during the interval since my previous visit.

The coal junks, which seemed to be old native traders, holding twenty to thirty tons each, were already round our steamer, and being full of nimble and half naked youngsters the coal dust soon came spinning about us into the saloon, and expedited our movements for the shore. No want of boats to take us there. A handsome young Abyssinian was busy engaging passengers for his boat, No. 4, while No. 1 was as busily attended to here as he commonly is elsewhere in the world. They all understood some English, and the boys constantly demanded "backsheish" (a present), or a chance of diving after small silver, thrown into the water at a few yards' distance, which they easily caught in their hands before it had sunk out of sight.

We landed and made our way through vast piles of coals, resembling the street blocks of some dingy town. I was informed that more than 60,000 tons of coals were collected here for the use of the steamers. The single hotel of the place stood just as I had left it, with its long stretching front and rude verandah, in all the triumph of the unpicturesque; but a stone's throw to the right of it as we approached had arisen a whole village of the dark races. Many of these were out in a kind of market-place in the foreground, waiting our welcome approach, with saddled horses and donkeys, a camel or two, and a display of native basket work, the only industrial product of the place that seemed worth carrying away. But as we had ladies in our party, and

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there were no side saddles, some of us had to wait for "buggies," which, after a couple of hours, came round from the town of Aden, and gave us the opportunity of starting for that place and the fortifications.

There is here an inner harbour, with water sufficient for the small native trading vessels, where the government have lately constructed a jetty that was abundantly made use of by the people. The protection of British law had marvellously stimulated business, and I seemed to be coming upon a second Victoria when I compared this scene with what I recollected four years before. The Arabs seemed now more reconciled to the obnoxious infidel sway and the vulgarities of trading.

Another village had sprung up close to this jetty, and through it passed constant streams of camels loaded with various wares, of which by far the most conspicuous were branches of bushes for firewood, and long stout rushes with fresh half dried long grass, twisted into ropes for convenience of carriage; both articles being for camel and horse fodder. We passed several strings of these loaded camels; they are strings literally in one respect, for they are all tied, the neck of one to the tail that goes before him, by a cord five or six yards in length, the oldest of the regiment commonly leading off. There was also a good trade going on in importing and burning coral to make lime, an article largely used for the exterior of all the better class of buildings, to save them from getting hot with the sun's rays. To think of coral being burnt for lime reminds one of early days in Australia when sacrile-

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gious sportsmen shot the superabundant cockatoos to dine the next day upon parrot pies.

There is, however, a much larger and more varied trade than we had the opportunity of witnessing. From an elevated part of the road our eye glanced across the considerable expanse of the outer harbour, to a country where the conspicuous sand of the desert was diversified with trees and shrubs that pleasantly dotted the surface, while lofty but rugged mountain ranges closed the horizon. This was in the direction of the well known Mokha, and with this town and the intermediate country, a considerable commerce was maintained. Everybody knows of Mokha coffee. At the hotel we got Mokha bananas, raisins, and dates, and legs and breasts of the Mokha district sheep. There is also a large trade in animals and fruits with the opposite coast of Africa, a trade that brings over great numbers of the sons of Ham from Galla and Southern and Eastern Abyssinia, whose swarthy race threatens to far outnumber all the others of the place.

An odd custom for this climate of a vertical sun was that of shaving the head, and going about without the slightest head gear. The Hindoo part of the population that come here, chiefly from Bombay, seems to have brought this custom, which some of the Africans imitate. It gave us phrenological opportunities that some took advantage of. The narrow, rather high head of the Hindoo, but tapering to a sort of ridge along the top, contrasted with the filled sides, flattened top, and erect forehead of the Abyssinian; who seemed much the

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superior in point of spirit and feature, although his crisp small curls and jetty skin give the impress of a lower grade. There seemed two races of Africans, one the dark Abyssinian; the other, which was most numerous, being probably from the country south and east of the first, and just opposite to Aden.

While yet upon races, let me introduce the Parsees, who are not to be mixed up with the ordinary Hindoo, but who have flocked hither along with him from Bombay. They are the only instance I ever met with of a race characterised by corpulence. That which is the accident of individuals in other races is the rule with them. You rarely see a lean Parsee, and almost as rare is even that medium Apollo which, with an allowance in the detail of departure, represents the great proportion of human forms. The Parsee has a heavy, sensual-looking yellowish countenance, with figure to match. He is, however, an excellent man of business, and his race at once takes the position of the upper class here; the few Europeans excepted. They have larger business minds than their fellows, and are straightforward and offhand in their dealings. They are, therefore, the mercantile class in this place, living in comparatively good houses and stores, over each of which is their distinctive terminal "jee." Sowlajee Bumanjee, or some such sound, had the supplying of our steamer, and, no doubt, made it answer his purpose as well as ours.

The Parsees are worshippers of fire; and some curious compunctions arise between them and their deity. I

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am told they cannot enjoy the luxury of a cigar, because it involves an extinguishing of the light. When their neighbour's house is on fire, they come forth and reverently worship; but when their own is seized upon by the undistinguishing god, although they will not themselves take part in its extinction, yet they have no objection to employ others to do so.

Leaving the village and jetty, which were about three miles distant from our hotel, we ascended a steep part of the road to where a deep narrow pass had been cut through the solid rocky hill. Descending this pass on the other side, the town of Aden lay before us, situated in a hollow surrounded by huge and rugged rocky summits, as by the walls of an amphitheatre. At the culmination of the pass we had to go through a gate guarded by soldiers; and high above our heads near the top of the rocks was an archway thrown over the cutting to communicate with the fortifications. There are here three companies of our military and two sepoy regiments. Little variety must our gallant countrymen have in this dreary maze of rocks and sand; but I was glad to observe that the soldiers were accoutred in a way suited to the climate, and that those Crimean mistakes that so enraged our good friend "Punch"—the stiff stock, thick, close, hot woollen coat and nether garments, the half-hundred-weight of hat, and the whole hundred of knapsack, had entirely disappeared.

Descending into the town, we passed on our left a small cemetery with its scattered mounds and tomb-

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stones in the old English style. A Roman-catholic church stood near it upon a rising ground, and higher up the rocky steeps were the foundations for a considerable English church commenced shortly previous. The steeple of a Mahometan mosque reared up its well-known form at the far extremity of the town.

We had now leisure to survey this wild and rugged scene. We had compassed by a winding path the principal mass of the rock which now lay between us and the hotel we had started from. Overtopping the highest crag, nearly 2000 feet above us, stood the signal-house, from whose staff waved the British flag and the signals of British commerce and enterprise. Doubtless there was some way of ascent to this aerial region more accessible to wingless man than any that our eyes had been able to find out. Four men are maintained constantly on this spot, relieving each other in a continual outlook, and each party relieved every two or three days.

Aden is described as being situated in the gorge of an ancient volcano. Of this we could entertain little doubt, both from the general aspect and the heaps of scoriaceous and other volcanic rocks that lay around us. Our wonder was at the huge scale of nature's operation; and the inference we could hardly resist, that if the present scene had formed one volcano there must have been several others adjacent even of larger dimensions, although not so well defined in the continuity or circularity of their sides. The present one is an irregular circle of about a mile in diameter. So steep and wall-

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like are the towering sides, that the part lying next to the chief fortifications is now being tunnelled through, in order to avoid the present circuit by the upper part of the harbour.

Connected with the volcanic features, I should allude to the wells hereabouts, where we saw a constant business in drawing water for the use of the large population. This water was put into roughly tanned pigskins, and set upon donkeys' backs, four skins to a load. The drawing-bucket itself was a skin set round a hoop. One requires the all-subduing effect of habit to connect pure water with the distended pigskin; which, excepting in the absence of the head and the further halves of the legs, still enjoys in its new vocation the round proportions of healthful dunghill life.

The depth of the wells must have been 100 feet; but instead of the cold beverage that one might have looked for from this abyss, the water came up quite warm. While the external air was about 80°, I should judge from the feeling that the water was about 95°. It tasted slightly mineral, although not unpleasant. The mass of the people use this water; but a better quality comes from the opposite side of the outer bay, which the European and wealthier residents prefer.

From the wells we directed our steps to the scene of a recent and very interesting discovery. According to my information, it is now about two years since the traces were first noticed of what has since proved to be the ancient remains of a complete system of water-tanks. These have been laid bare, following up in

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successive basins the indentations or steep ravines that furrow the sides of the highest part of the amphitheatre. These side basins seem to have been connected with still larger reservoirs beyond them, made so as to secure every drop of the rare but terrific rainfalls of this peculiar climate.

The condition in which these side reservoirs had been laid bare could not now be seen, as they had all been cleared out and put into efficient repair. A number of men were now busy in restoring the decayed aqueducts leading from the sides to the more central and larger basins. One of these last was just being emptied out. It tapered slightly towards the bottom with ledges scarcely a foot in depth, and a recess with a staircase. The excavation had got to about twenty-four feet from the highest part that remained of the original structure, and there were yet no symptoms of the basis. The largest of the side basins was about this depth from the top of the parapet that completed it; and at the base was a small circular excavation, three or four feet deep, carefully cemented, like the rest of the work, and useful, one may fancy, for either giving the last of the water or catching the first of the mud; or, yet more likely, as a convenience for washing out the tank.

At the depth of its excavation, the large tank measured forty-five paces, exclusive of three or four feet of recess for the stair. The sides were very hard, formed apparently of lime and stones like small gravel mixed together, and built against the side of the excavation, just as the ancient pick may be supposed to have left it.

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There are no soils and subsoils and clay beds in this peculiar place. Even the deepest wells reach nothing but stones large and small, compacted together by their own superincumbent weight. The concrete gravel I have alluded to, was finished off with a coating of cement, which had worn or fallen off in some places. This concrete had been visible above the surface, cropping out like a small geological system, but had remained all this time unheeded. A few feet from the edge of this basin were other croppings, which are probably to lead to further discoveries.

One may readily understand the advantage of the tanks to a large population, not only from the superiority of the water they would furnish, but from the greater expedition with which supplies adequate to the people's wants would be procured. These supplies at present come very tardily through the wells, at each of which a couple of men were hard at work all day long, raising and lowering their little skin buckets, in a ceaseless fight to minister to the 25,000 or 30,000 mouths that were probably comprised in the rocky peninsula of the British territory. A large part of the daily trade comprised the supplying of fresh water, which, as performed after this rudimentary eastern fashion, was a great drag upon the labour power of the community. A good windlass and a large tub for the well, with a common watercart in substitution for the donkey and his pig-skins, would have worked marvels towards curing the evil; but these people would just as soon have thought of flying in the air, or of admitting the superiority of Christians to their own

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people, or any other like extravagance, as of abandoning this time-honoured mode of dispensing Allah's best blessing in their thirsty land: and, to say the truth, they showed all the marvels of dexterity that their dull plan would admit of.

I did not learn how many wells there were in the hollow, but perceived they were all numbered; the highest number that I came across being thirty-four. I may remark that the small parapets round the side tanks, already alluded to, besides acting as sides to a trough that was to carry the surplus of one tank into the void of another, served also to convey water from several wells that had also been sunk in this direction. The top of the wall was grooved to a few inches in depth and covered with flat stones, and in this groove the water drawn from the wells was running down from the higher levels adjoining the rocks and ravines to the lower ground towards the town, the general surface of the whole site having somewhat of a shallow saucer-form. I noticed that these higher wells were close to the rocks that towered almost perpendicularly above them, and as they seemed fully deeper than the lower wells, we may suppose that the same perpendicularity of rock was continued below for upwards of a hundred feet.

And, lastly, we may venture to conclude, that the whole crater forms one immense natural tank, whose porous contents of stones and gravel, the débris of long ages hacked by time and weather from the flinty sides, have contended with the fitful showers of heaven in filling up together the huge basin. Between the showers

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of rain and the showers of stone, both thus contending to fill up the crater, the water has hitherto come short of its rival; nor is it likely, with the constant preying of all these wells, to surmount at a future time the hundred feet or thereabouts of present inferiority.

The town of Aden, as I was told by one of the Parsee merchants, contains 15,000 inhabitants. For this population its area is unusually small, to European notions as to health and comfort. But it was easy to see, when we got into the thick hives of the Arab quarters, with their narrow lanes and contiguous little domiciles, that their numbers had not been over estimated. These houses, if they deserve the name, are a net-work of canes, with an inside lining of rush matting. Each tenement was distinctly bounded from its neighbour, although contiguous, and it seemed to consist of either one or two rooms, having an eminently rustic outer door of the usual matting, and a little back enclosure, where we saw broods of poultry. How such a heap of combustibles escapes fire for twenty-four hours together is a marvel, where daily cooking is going on amidst wind, intense heat, and a total absence of any surplus supply of water; for we saw the smoke of fires issuing from several of the back areas, and could readily surmise that one accident or piece of mischief in any one spot would likely involve all the rest. We must only fall back upon the proverbial sobriety of what we distinguish as inferior races, and a characteristic social integrity and good faith, more effective than the best police.

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Much of the town, however, was more solidly constructed, the buildings being clumsy squares, with small windows and flat roofs. They are built of the stones that are so numerous around, with a plentiful use of lime; and being of good thickness, with a white glossy exterior, they effectually resist the most broiling sun. The principal street was thronged with shops and traders; and at a spacious and well-ventilated butcher's shop, we saw the goats and small sheep of the country hung up, in fore and hind quarters, legs, and so forth, much as in our own towns. We were not impressed with the cleanliness of all around us; but standing as the town does upon a ground so conveniently porous, we may presume that the question of drainage has ever been one of the least of its troubles; although, at the same time, we would prefer to hope that the peculiar flavour of the Aden wells is derived from the mysterious agents below rather than those more patent ones that may descend from the town above.

The population comprised a general admixture, — from the recluse and haughty Arab to the Parsees, Hindoos, and various Africans, who had inundated his ancestral territory ever since destiny and the prophet had mysteriously permitted the British rule. He still takes but grudgingly to this state of things; and although the Aden government allows, of course, free ingress on its part, and there is, in consequence, a large and increasing trade with the interior country, the Arab spirit is still hostile. For this reason some of our party, who had gone to what is called the

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Turkish wall, at the furthest extremity of the British boundary, were not allowed to pass the gate. Nor even in the town itself could we get admission to the mosque or caravanserai, although the powerful "backsheish" was freely offered.

The light tawny hue and broad European-looking faces of the Arabs, are readily distinguished from those of the other races. Their features are not attractive, excepting in occasional instances with the youth of either sex, where neither the furrows nor sour looks of manhood had been attained. A good many Jews came in our way, all of whom seemed engaged in money-changing; greatly to the convenience of a mass of customers, who were perplexed with the shillings and halfcrowns given to them for purchases, boat-hire, and backsheish by their English visitors. The current money here is the rupee of the East India Company, which is about two shillings English. We were constantly importuned to make exchanges at this "par" rate with our rupees, and could easily conjecture that this was not the rate in the dealings with the Jews. I was here tempted to an experiment very flattering in its results to Englishmen, and which I have repeatedly tried in Egypt, Ceylon, and elsewhere with equal success, — this is to produce the British sovereign. The cries of "No good!" with which the silver money was greeted, are immediately changed into a general shout of recognition. Even the almighty dollar of Brother Jonathan pales before it; and our Queen's "image and superscription" thus sways a yet larger territory than her own vast empire.

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As we returned towards the anchorage, we halted for a minute upon the rising part of the road, just after emerging from the gate, at the pass of the rocks, to take a view of the Arabian plain that stretched out below us to the far horizon. To the west of us, it looked diversified and promising, the country having a slight elevation, with high but inhospitable-looking mountains in the far background. To the east, it was low and sterile, sloping, almost imperceptibly, into the outer waters of the Gulf of Aden, where many long, concentric sweeps of surging waves showed the shallowness of the sea and the encroachment of the dominant sand.

Coming from pastoral Australia, we speculated on pastoral Arabia. We understood there were many sheep, both hereabouts and in opposite Africa; and small but fat and sleek cattle came over abundantly from Abyssinia. For these latter, the importers charged six dollars, or 24*s.*, and were understood to have themselves paid in Africa 16*s.* The sheep were of the size of a small fine Australian merino, being clad, instead of wool, with a short thick hair of dingy white, something like our common kinds of the smaller-sized dogs. They have black heads and most peculiar tails, looking like a lump of fat. The vessel was charged at the rate of 5*s.* each for these animals, but we understood they could be bought in quantity for half that sum. We passed on, leaving some squatters of our party deep in a calculation about the production of wool and tallow, and balancing the amplitude of the runs against the precariousness of the tenure.

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No time had been lost in coaling during our absence, so that when we returned on board, just before sunset, that dingy operation was just concluding, the steam was already up, and in half an hour more, with our Arab pilot on board, we had got under weigh. With the aid of black stokers, whom we had now recruited with, we made eleven knots without sails, and thus learned that the first stock of coals was not the sole culprit. In fact, between the coals, the barnacled and grassy sides of the ship, and the stokers, we were content with the solution on the speed question.

Next morning, as I looked out from my port, the sun was rising over those rugged mountains towards which I had seen him hastening to set on the previous afternoon. Behind us were the small Island of Perim, which our Government, through the East India Company, have just added to the many other possessions of the empire, and the Strait of Babelmandeb, through which we had passed two hours before; while ahead was the expanse of the famous Red Sea, through which we are gaily careering, with a stiff southerly breeze and all sails unfurled.

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CHAP. V.

EGYPT.

The Red Sea.—Climate and Temperature.—Intended Line of Steamers between Suez and Kosseir.—Crossing Place of the Red Sea.—Suez.—The Electric Telegraph across the Desert.—Railway between Cairo, Suez, and Alexandria.—Aspect of the Desert Camel Traffic.—Descent from the Desert to Cairo.—The Pyramids.—Valley of the Nile.—The Sphinx and the Great Pyramid.—Bedouin Guides.—Ascent of the Great Pyramid.—Feats of the Bedouins.—View from the Summit.—Characteristics of the Bedouins.—Near View of the Sphinx.—Railway to Alexandria.—Progress of Commerce.—Present Aspect of Egypt.—Difference of Cairo and Alexandria.—Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's Needles.—The Screw Steamer "Jura."

We ploughed the long lines of the Red Sea with remarkably little to excite our attention beyond those crowding associations of the past that spoke of this ancient highway of the human race. As we kept the mid channel, we scarcely ever caught a glimpse of land till we approached the Gulf of Suez, excepting a few islands of the most sterile character. The dark ocean blue of the water showed that it had an ocean depth; but we saw no signs of fish, and, beyond a few land birds that seemed to have got rather far to sea and fluttered about the vessel to find a temporary rest, no other signs of life. The climate at this time of year (the latter half

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of March) is pleasant, unless the weather be calm, when the air feels rather close. The temperature varied between 74°, the lowest I observed at daybreak, and 82° or 83°, the highest to which it rose during the day, with a southerly wind. This was not a high range; but we remarked the extraordinary humidity of the air, which no doubt contributed to an oppressive effect. Our clothes had generally a damp feeling. Between two such dry countries as Africa and Arabia this seemed a curious anomaly.

No sail appeared on this secluded sea; and it was quite an event for us, when rather more than halfway, to meet the Bombay mail steamer, punctual to her time, upon the outward voyage. The Calcutta boat passed us the day following. The present Pasha of Egypt intends to open up the trade of the various ports of this sea, and is now getting ready four steamers for the purpose, which are to ply on the west side, between Suez and Kosseir, and probably further south, even to Mocha.

A high projecting promontory on the west side told us, in early morn, of the vicinity of Suez. We had passed Horeb and Sinai during the night; but now we approached the sacred but contested ground of the "crossing-place," which, by some, is placed just above this high land, while others place it at the head of the sea, where a little creek is found to enter. Here Bonaparte with his soldiers tried the crossing; and local tradition has already entwined some miracles with the occurrence,—hostile of course to the profane general.

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We arrived on 26th March, just thirty-nine days from Melbourne. Our large steamer anchored five miles from Suez, in about three and a half fathoms of soundings only; and as we sat together in the small steamer that came down for us, we could see below us the massive outline of the "Simla" reposing in the clear quiet water and almost touching the shallow bottom. The small steamer made a great detour to avoid an extensive bank running down the mid channel. The head of the Red Sea is quite low and sandy, the only object being the elevation of Suez, whose dingy and rude buildings give it the appearance of some old ruinous fortification. The only different edifice is the hotel; a square building whose bright white plastering stands out in great and acceptable relief.

We were soon upon thoroughly Oriental ground, amidst Arabs and innumerable camels. We made the most of the short time we were allowed here, by getting a smart boy who spoke some English to take us through the Bazaar, where we found a considerable trade going on, chiefly in native productions of these people and lands. In the airy room of a first floor we heard the noise of children at a school. The pleasantest thing we found to buy in Suez was oranges, which were really delicious. The Arabs began to sell them at one shilling per dozen, but as our departure time came on the price fell one half.

At the hotel we found the outward passengers waiting for the "Oneida." They had been a fortnight in this land of classic reminiscences, and were detailing their

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sufferings in a constant warfare with the great enemy—time. A somewhat hilarious colonist of this party, returning to Melbourne, was ordering the Arab waiters about, under the general designation of Mahomet.

Just before starting, the arrival of the steamer "Jura," at Alexandria, was telegraphed to Suez. She brought the outward passengers for the "Simla." This intelligence reminded us that the electric telegraph had found its way through the desert. On quitting Suez by the vans, the first object that met our eyes was the long line of telegraph posts and wires stretching far as the eye could reach into the empty desert. The railway is already half finished between Cairo and Suez, and in full work between Cairo and Alexandria.

The mail boxes, and the passengers and baggage pretty well filled up a considerable enclosure opposite to our starting place. At noon we were seated in our vans, six of a party. There were horses for five vans only, and our party required eight, so the matter was settled by lot, and some had to remain for about four hours, until the first relays had returned. We started with the usual difficulties about the horses, the Pasha's nags being only of a tenth-rate description, and the harness even lower in the scale of the arts. The vans, although rustic-looking fabrics upon two wheels, were yet padded and comfortable inside. We passed the walls and gate of Suez and found ourselves galloping over the wide Desert.

The best idea I can give of the Desert is that of a country having in a great measure the ordinary contour —hill and dale, plain and mountain chain—but, instead

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of vegetation, the whole surface covered with stones and sand. Our road consisted of the breadth of a good highway, swept clear of stones, which were piled up at each side and served to mark the route in the night time. The surface, which originally was rather hard, had been much cut and loosened by the vans. We were told the road was macadamised further on; but we found very little we could so dignify till within four or five miles of Cairo, when we found it tolerably made with the flint gravel of the Desert, and rolled over by a huge rolling stone which we had previously passed.

All the business of the Desert here is done by means of camels, as indeed it has been done since the earliest records. The profane irruption of European modes with these vans has first broken the uniformity of the time-honoured scenery. What between these machines heaving their square unpicturesque forms upon the sandy horizon, the electric telegraphs and the encroaching railways, I fear the Oriental breast will be utterly distracted. I could mark a great increase in the camel traffic since my last visit, and it was not difficult to trace the main cause: for, prominent among the long trains of camels that were continually passing us during the night, were the loadings of articles destined for the overland passengers. For example, an entire convoy was loaded with casks of bottled beer, each camel carrying four of these packages. At other times we passed cases of wine and brandy, and a huge cask that had the familiar aspect of a hogshead of porter was slung from a strong tree-stem supported by two camels.

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We had stages every five or six miles, and the night became so cold that we were glad to get out and enjoy some active motion. We had three meals, chiefly of tough chickens, on the way. Day broke as we reached the last stage, and we saw before us the walls and palaces of Cairo. We were, still, however, a great way from the town, which was not reached till after three miles of devious wanderings through lanes of huge cacti, date-trees, and many green fields aided by artificial irrigation. We were continually descending from the high ground of the desert. We entered Cairo at a place where a new gateway of lofty pretensions is being erected, and were soon in a large open space full of trees and shrubs, where we halted opposite Shepheard's Hotel shortly after six o'clock.

As we were two days behind time with reference to the Australian mail, and knew that our leisure in the overland transit through Egypt would be cut down to the last moment, we resolved to be up and doing, and, after the aid of a dressing-room, we had a carriage and were off before breakfast to the citadel. Here we inspected the fine mosque, the palace of Saladin, where Napoleon had his quarters, the Pasha's carriages, Joseph's Well, and the parapet over which the sole survivor of the massacred Beys had made his leap and escaped. But without question the great attraction of the citadel is the magnificent view of the surrounding city, the valley of the Nile, and the vast Desert skirted on the margin by the everlasting Pyramids.

My first view of the Pyramids, on my previous journey, disappointed me. They seemed much nearer

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Cairo than they really are, and you are at the first glance surprised that they make no greater appearance. Now, when I took my second view this feeling was entirely corrected. But no one who desires to realise these huge memorials of past time should refrain from visiting at least the Great Pyramid, which is the nearest, and, if possible, reaching its summit. This we resolved to accomplish; and, having strengthened ourselves with an excellent breakfast, were soon upon the road.

The distance is between eight and nine miles, and as, after one night travelling in the Desert, which had not permitted of much if any sleep to our party, we were indisposed to any avoidable fatigue, we curtailed the donkey riding to the last five or six miles, taking a carriage the length of Old Cairo. Here, with the donkeys which were waiting for us, we crossed the Nile, just above where an island divides the stream into two branches. A residence of the Pasha is on this island, and a Nilometer is kept to measure the rise of the river. Our dragoman was intelligent enough, but strongly disposed to magnify his country — as, for example, by telling us that Cairo had a million and a half of people, and that he could count three thousand mosques in and around the city. Cairo has, I believe, over 200,000 people, and a prodigious proportion of mosques, which do not seem to be built according to the religious wants of the people but the piety of rich Moslems, who leave their property for that purpose and rear an edifice to bear their name after death. Every true believer, as our

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man gravely informed us, attends the daily prayers and hastens to the nearest mosque.

The Nile had not begun to rise at this time. It does not do so till fully a month later. By that time the various crops begin to ripen, and they are all, with a remarkable adaptation, successively matured and cut before the waters have taken possession of the ground. Crossing the river, we passed through a village and some plantations of date-trees, and emerged upon the open flat of the Nile, which was full of waving crops diversified with tracts of grass, lucerne, and clover. Many camels, sheep, and oxen were feeding on the ample crops. Several dirty-looking villages of mudbricks were perched upon little hillocks over the flat. At the height of the flood these villages are all covered, and the population either flock into Cairo, or busy themselves in an extensive carrying trade that is then instituted to all neighbourhoods, with the numerous camels and cattle that are, equally with their masters, turned off their homes and pastures.

Larger the Pyramids loom forth as our little donkeys patter over the fields with their heavy living cargoes. There are no fences dividing these rich fields of the Pasha's, so our course is little interrupted. We are making for the Great Pyramid. A little back and to the left stands a second, perceptibly less, but also a vast and towering object as we approach. Between these two, but lower down towards the valley than either, appears a dark round object, in which, on a nearer approach, the well-known headdress gradually

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assures us that we gaze upon the far-famed Sphinx. Several beautiful and strange-looking birds alight within twenty yards of us. They are the white Ibis. Now we climb up the steep slope of the Desert, marking many excavations, and curious and massive objects lying around. At a hundred yards we give our panting animal a breath while we survey the mountain before us. A minute more, and we are at the base of the Great Pyramid.

A tribe of Bedouins has been watching our progress, and soon we are in the midst of the roar of a battle field. First of all we apply to our hamper to take some luncheon, and send our dragoman on a message to the sheikh of the tribe requesting him to keep his men away while we eat. This courtesy is performed very creditably. But no sooner have we finished than we are again surrounded. Three of the party, including myself, have resolved to ascend; two, including my wife, who is with us, remain below. There is now a regular charge of four shillings from each traveller for three assisting Bedouins, besides two shillings from the party to the two sheikhs of the tribe, making our total fourteen shillings. This was all clearly understood; but we had not got up one hundred feet ere each of us was beset for backsheish, and in such a succession of exhortatory and supplicatory terms as are very difficult to be resisted, particularly when you feel how helpless you are if left to your own powers in this arduous business. The best course is to pay no attention whatever to these requests, and to order your men on

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at your own convenience and with all the gravity of indifference that you can assume. Once give way, and this sign of weakness will keep them worrying you incessantly.

If a distant view of the Great Pyramid disappoints the traveller, his nearer inspection makes ample amends. My own feelings of wonder as I gazed upon so prodigious a pile of building were mingled, however, with a shade of depression in reflecting that the sweat and toil of a nation of human beings should have been wasted on an object apparently so useless. As I ascended step by step, and glanced along the lengthened parallels of the sides, the mind could form some idea of the huge dimensions of the fabric from the countless numbers of the stones, and snatch some guidance as to the time and labour necessary for the erection. There is no uniformity either as to the size of the stones or the height and parallel character of the lines of steps that surround the Pyramid and graduate its triangular shape. There is only the general taper preserved. This apparent defect is explained by the circumstance that what now appears as the exterior has evidently been once the mere rough finish over which has been laid a final coating of smoothed stone. We are partly guided to this by the appearance of the adjacent Pyramid, where the outer finish has not yet fallen off from a portion of the summit, and gives to the edifice, at a distance, the effect of a thick skin on its upper part which has been peeled off from below.

The hardy Bedouins save you nearly all difficulty in

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the ascent. Two take each a hand, and one pushes from behind, so that every obstacle is surmounted in a flying style. The Pyramid itself is scarcely more wonderful than the strength of muscle of these men as they sported about upon the giant staircase we were ascending. By their help the summit is reached easily in twenty minutes; but I confess to very jaded knee joints on the happy occasion, and I doubt if I could have ascended in two hours without our Arabian coadjutors.

The top of the Pyramid does not come to a point as we may fancy from a distance, but has a flat surface of about twenty feet square. And yet the irregularity of this surface shows that it was not the original finish. One part is higher than another, as if one layer of the stones had only by one-half or two-thirds completed its disappearance. We could see here, too, the mode of building the Pyramid, which further appeared in the irregularity as to detail indicated by the parallel steps. The stones were all cut quadrangular, and closely fitted to each other; but they had no regularity as to size, further than this, that even the smallest seemed of such dimensions as to suggest the idea of great labour to place them where they are. Cubes or oblongs of three to five feet in height seemed a common size. One may readily suppose that between the wearing effects of 3000 years and the fancies and frolics of a million or so of visitors, the summit has been gradually denuded of its culminating stones.

While we sat to rest our wearied limbs, the lively

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Bedouins, anxious to make the most of our visit, planned all sorts of exploits to be done for so much money, when they found us decided in refusing more backsheish. We had in a soft, or rather a tired moment, when half-way up, given them two shillings to each party. For two shillings one man offered to run up the Great Pyramid in five minutes, which I doubt not he would have done. We settled, however, that for three shillings one should, within ten minutes, descend from the top of the Great Pyramid where we were all assembled, and reach the summit of the adjacent Pyramid. The instant the bargain was made, the man disappeared over the corner next the second Pyramid; and I reached the dizzy edge just to see him tripping down with as much facility as if upon the most graduated staircase. His leaps were irregular, to suit the stones; but although some of the steps were four and even five feet high, with occasional narrow ledges to alight upon, he took them all in the same flying style. He disappeared from view after one-fourth or so of the descent; but within five minutes he emerged upon the uneven ground between the two pyramids, running like some flattened insect beneath us. The ascent of the second Pyramid seemed more difficult than that of the first, particularly on reaching the smooth part near the top, where the Arab had several times to run along the parallel edges of the stones to find irregularities for his ascent. He took eleven minutes, however; and his countrymen, who regarded the hands of the watch with some interest, remarked

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that he was too fat, and that others would do it to the time. But we were quite satisfied.

To many persons the descent will prove much the more difficult task. Little used to precipitous heights of this kind, I felt rather uncomfortable as I turned my eyes downwards from an elevation measured perpendicularly of about 480 feet. The slope of the Pyramid, as you regard it from the top, is quite inadequate to relieve the giddy effect of its height. Any overbalance from a false step could not be recovered by ordinary expertness. I could not fancy any lady attempting the Pyramid; and yet one of the first objects to meet our eyes on the summit was the name of one such fair adventurer. "Isabella M'Kay" was very distinct upon one of the stones; and the interesting fact thus communicated may for once excuse this barbarous fashion of my countrymen of bedaubing with their ungainly modern names the interesting remnants of these classic lands.

The summit of the Great Pyramid commanded an extensive prospect, although limited as to variety of scene. Towards the north lay Cairo, environed by the green vale of the Nile, and conspicuous chiefly by the innumerable minarets of its mosques. Towards the south nearly a dozen pyramids, small and great, reared their triangular forms on the margin of the desert; while to the far western interior stretched the undulating surface of the sandy ocean, with the long lines of the camel-tracks winding through the sandy vales. Some large black spots on one of these lines, a few miles off, we readily descried to be a train of camels. They were

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moving towards Cairo, and, as the Arabs informed us, had come from Moghara, an oasis of the Desert.

In the course both of ascending and coming down, I could not help admiring our Bedouins. They were certainly the men for the time, superior to all others for our purpose, and for that time they took a pre-eminent consideration. Their fine athletic limbs not only gave the most effectual aid, but it was given with a care and gentleness that were quite charming, and the more so as there was not the least tendency to mischief or even sport in their procedure. I was therefore quite in love with my Bedouins, although I right well knew that, as far as their own compunctions were concerned, they would just as readily as not, or at least for a very moderate consideration, have pitched us all to the bottom, or knocked our brains out against any of the hard sharp ledges over which we sprung so easily. For this perfect safety of travellers, I believe we are mainly indebted to the iron hand of the Pasha, which would not fail to reach these people in the event of any misconduct. Even an accident would expose them to punishment; and when one of us talked of going up the Pyramid without Arabs, the dragoman said that both he and the Sheikh would first require a certificate in writing that such had been our own choice, so as to free them from any consequences of such a journey.

This wholesome restraint, aided by a certain simplicity, gravity, and integrity common to savage life, give now an entire safety to these expeditions. I am even persuaded that any young lady of adequate nerve and

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muscle, and as attractive otherwise as the reader pleases, may gallop her donkey to the Pyramids wholly unattended, select her three Bedouins, ascend, descend, and within six hours return to Cairo, without having encountered the least offence to her modesty, or an obstacle of any kind, beyond an unremitting persecution for backsheish, requested with the most untiring representations and ingenious compliments.

We passed the Sphinx in our descent to the valley. The havoc of time upon the face, together with the loss of the nose, give some difficulty in realising the human countenance when close under the figure. But a glimpse of the mouth soon lightens up the whole face; in which, but particularly in this feature of it, there must have been the expression of a fine repose of life that still lingers in the mutilated figure before us. The excavations were reaching the haunches of the huge form, and displayed a quantity of building that projected backwards from the shoulders. The head looks over the verdant plain to the maternal Nile, as if to bless her annual gifts to the dependent millions of her children.

Wearied with sights and toils, at 10 P.M. we found ourselves seated in the railway carriage bound for Alexandria. These are in the first-class Parisian style, in broad contrast to the present state of the "Suez line." The rails were steady, and the noise and motion diminished to a degree rarely equalled even in Europe. Our only regret was the want of daylight. I have therefore the less to speak upon. About halfway, we got out to cross in a small steamer to the left bank of the

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Nile, where the railway again received us, and brought us, at 5 A.M., into Alexandria.

Here the hotels were so full that we had to put up with very indifferent accommodations. A marvellous change has come over Alexandria within the last three or four years. The harbour was crowded with shipping; and sections of town lands, worth then a few hundred pounds, were now freely selling for as many thousands. At this rate the old repute of Alexandria will soon once more return. The Pasha usually resides here, and his ample palace, with its high surmounting harem, is seen on the lighthouse promontory off the eastern part of the city, in the direction of the memorable Aboukir. The old Pharos isle, now connected by the sands with the mainland, appears at the western extremity of the crescent-shaped harbour.

The present aspect of Egypt gives some illustration political and material to the chequered history of the past. The Pasha's must be classed with the native governments such as that of the Pharaohs. His normal capital is Cairo; and modern Alexandria represents the incrustation of ancient civilisation that came with the Greeks. There is, to be sure, a modern difference, inasmuch as this civilisation has not brought with it the dominion, as in the age of the Ptolemies. That circumstance has therefore limited its features and influence in the present day. But Egypt is sufficiently under the effect of civilisation from without to influence its government to act consistently with the interests of commerce and enterprise.

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What most strikes one at Cairo, and the point wherein it differs from Alexandria, is, that as regards the political and material aspects, it is all rulers and no people. If you see a mansion of any pretensions, it belongs to the Pasha's general, his architect, or his harem-keeper; or a splendid palace, if it be not one of the dozen or so that belong to his Highness himself, is sure to be his mother's, or his brother's, or his wife's grandmother's, or some one's who comes within the family group. Except an hotel or two, with a few scores of Europeans, Cairo is still the true type of old Egypt — the Egypt of Thebes and the Pyramids — whose history is comprised in the lives and deeds of successive princes, and where the ruling power is the sole ostensible existence, embracing the whole people and their labours as a part of one vast and sole individuality.

The civilisation of ancient Egypt, as deduced from its gigantic monuments, must be regarded in a very qualified light. It represents a vast command of human labour, the long familiar use or abuse of which has given at once the massive scale and the admired simplicity of design. The combination is totally opposed to the utilitarian tendencies of these modern times, and to that democratic spirit which induces the people to appropriate to themselves a very sensible share of those comforts which their industry formerly heaped exclusively on their kings and nobility.

Our stay in Alexandria being limited to a few hours, we promptly hired a carriage and were off to the sights.

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These are the famous Pompey's Pillar, Cleopatra's Needles, the native bazaars, and the Slave Market. A Turkish bath may be included. We contented ourselves with the three first. Neither the Pillar nor the Needles pertain to the times to which popular tradition has assigned them, but to an age somewhat later. The first impresses you but poorly until you approach within a few hundred yards, when the mind becomes aware of its great dimensions, in reflecting that the shaft consists of a single stone. The glimpses of it, as we pass through the town, give the trifling impression of a mere manufactory chimney, or even the funnel of some large steamboat.

The Needles are placed to sad disadvantage. The one that remains erect now rises out of a small quadrangular pit some four or five feet deep, and thus the eye in surveying the interesting relic loses the effect of nearly ten feet of elevation due to the column. The effect, therefore, is totally destroyed, and it is only by an effort of arithmetic that we can realise a due consideration for what we are looking at. The accumulating rubbish which has occasioned this sunken position, has all but extinguished the fallen Needle. Only a few square feet of the thickest part of the block now reach the surface, and from the rubbish that seems to be tossing about in this quarter, even this will soon disappear; we shall then, perhaps, as in old time with Pompeii, forget that there ever was a second Needle, and, more easily still, that it was presented to England by the Pasha. Indeed, I fear this last circumstance has

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been forgotten already. We can scarcely wonder that the Pasha lets his antiquities go to wreck when our own government is so careless about their share of them. We may well doubt the House of Commons ever sanctioning the cost of transferring this column to England, but it is surely worthy of the measure of recognition involved in clearing away the rubbish, and perhaps enclosing the venerable relic with a neat open railing. The enhanced effect of such a clearance may induce his Highness to perform a like duty to his own column.

We were hardly embarked and busy with our baggage when an irregular firing of guns brought us to the deck. We found the Pasha's war-ships and land-forts all firing together, in a glorious waste of powder and independence of regular time. There must have been at least one hundred guns fired off, the cause of which was the return of the Pasha from a fair at a town half way to Cairo, to which he had gone the previous day.

Shortly after this alarm we set sail. The beautiful screw steamer, "Jura," was now our conveyance; and we soon experienced, what I had already done during my previous passage this way, the superiorities in every way of a part of one's route where there is the marvellous stimulus of competition. The log told twelve knots "off;" the ship was remarkably trim and fresh painted, the stewards uniformly civil, gliding noiselessly through their work, and never in your way unless specially called. The whole ship was thoroughly up to its work, without any one being seen working; and no captain was visible, beyond a very affable gentle-

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man, who seemed to have leisure to speak to every one who was disposed to speak to him, and who never was heard by his passengers to give out a word savouring of authority. The meals were excellent, all piping hot, and the tea, for the first time, redeemed from that steamboat flavour that is almost stereotyped to the article and the place. In short, the passengers, made quite as much of as perhaps was good for them, retired to rest, thoroughly satisfied.

These *agrémens* were shortly put to their trial, for that night a fresh breeze took us ahead, raising a considerable swell, and in the heaving and pitching creating an unpleasantness that, with our previous good fortune, we had not experienced since we left Port Phillip. We had speculated on making Malta in sixty hours; but now the captain declined the uncertain calculation. Concern is upon some faces, for, unless we can arrive in seventy-six hours, there will be no daylight to buy the laces and coral ornaments, and after eighty hours we shall be too late even for the opera.

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HOME.

I closed my last section with the design of keeping up full notes to the last; I should therefore have had to relate all the adventures during a few hours at Malta, the aspect of Gibraltar as we swept rapidly past in the silence of midnight, and the expected storms but actual calms of the Bay of Biscay. But having deferred my notes till I reached this country, I take advantage of the break to be done with them.

It was the 9th of April, and notwithstanding the early season, England looked beautiful as we made her favoured garden the Isle of Wight. I gazed upon the trimmed aspect of this fine island, that had delighted me as I looked upon the selfsame landscape four years before, on my return from semi-wild Australia. Not less pleasant was the contrast as we sped along upon the South Western Rail. Promptly we reached the great metropolis, and amidst friends and old scenes I bring my volume to a close.

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APPENDIX.

POPULATION.

A Census of the colony of Victoria, taken on 29th March of this year, 1857, is now being arranged. The preceding Census was taken on 26th April, 1854. It was generally supposed to have been imperfectly taken, and to give results rather under the truth. The following is an abstract of the estimated population since that date, and based upon its Census returns. The years 1854 and 1855 are taken from the Registrar General's publications, and the succeeding figures from the "Argus" newspaper summaries: —

Date.	Males.	Females.	Total.
26th April 1854	155,886	80,912	236,798
31st December 1854	179,094	96,841	275,865
" 1855	207,171	112,208	319,379
" 1856	. .	. .	351,000
31st March, 1857	. .	. .	362,152

The following are some particulars of the census of 26th April, 1854: —

Ages of the People in Quinquennial Periods, including Travellers, &c., whose Ages are estimated.

At Ages.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
All ages	236,798	155,886	80,912
0	26,266	13,080	13,186
5	20,432	10,305	10,127
10	15,515	8,146	7,369
15	16,595	9,319	7,276
20	38,167	25,942	12,225
25	39,408	29,249	10,159
30	30,285	22,503	7,782
35	19,219	14,132	5,087
40	13,979	10,484	3,495
45	7,453	5,633	1,820
50	5,213	3,982	1,230
55	1,929	1,405	524
60	1,397	1,010	387
65	512	373	139
70	264	201	63
75	92	66	26
80 and upwards . .	73	56	17

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Population and Ages of Persons in the Electoral Districts of the Legislative Assembly, according to the 17th Victoria (New Constitution Act).

Electoral Districts.	Ages.							
	Under 20 Years.		20 Years and under 40.		40 Years and under 60.		60 Years and upwards.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Melbourne	5,809	5,692	13,410	6,345	2,775	131	222	114
St. Kilda	1,660	1,823	2,042	1,650	580	312	43	31
Collingwood	3,509	3,737	4,854	3,632	1,180	761	98	65
S. Melbourne	973	988	2,041	1,048	402	178	21	14
Richmond	1,481	1,598	2,000	1,558	540	379	37	27
Williamstone	435	460	935	462	213	75	14	7
Brighton	617	633	603	484	227	136	21	8
Geelong	3,964	4,208	5,201	3,819	1,522	834	156	92
Portland	497	653	433	483	147	88	16	12
Belfast	286	358	270	255	90	57	11	11
Warrnambool	217	241	208	157	78	41	5	1
Colac	173	186	174	135	60	24	6	1
Kilmore	452	480	644	331	236	79	27	7
Kyneton Boroughs	387	389	859	295	272	63	39	10
Murray ditto	217	233	384	155	128	33	14	5
Alberton	178	160	195	117	85	32	11	2
Castlemaine Boroughs	403	291	1,047	339	245	55	11	4
Sandhurst ditto	991	688	4,005	832	677	125	37	4
North Grant	948	756	3,072	813	540	136	25	8
North Grenville	1,220	973	4,051	995	719	187	29	10
The Ovens	439	306	1,902	256	456	56	26	1
Rodney	375	233	1,268	275	370	48	22	1
The Loddon	2,319	1,708	10,412	1,944	1,799	310	92	14
Talbot	2,033	1,599	6,620	1,673	1,440	264	81	5
E. Bourke	1,864	1,890	2,625	1,377	799	363	67	34
W Bourke	1,309	1,221	2,244	1,021	730	212	93	34
S. Bourke	1,124	1,009	1,424	798	404	180	33	18
S. Grant	1,435	1,373	1,642	925	604	237	77	26
Evelyn and Mornington	586	540	723	330	261	106	23	11
Anglesey	181	151	411	115	114	34	23	2
Dundas and Follett	393	363	456	246	184	52	24	6
Normanby	348	366	370	281	144	53	13	11
Villiers and Heytesbury	940	912	952	597	428	129	63	17
Polwarth, Ripon, Hampden and South Grenville	516	456	821	337	348	100	30	2
Murray	363	287	669	193	303	51	22	6
Gipps Land	254	219	316	133	172	40	28	5
Wimmera	423	368	1,016	269	435	79	40	6
Total of Electoral Districts	39,044	37,462	80,409	34,675	19,726	6,960	1,631	629
Travellers, and persons in ships and hulks	644	134	4,381	168	587	31	22	1
Grand Totals	39,688	37,596	84,790	34,843	20,313	6,991	1,653	630

Number of Members to be Assigned to and Returned for each Electoral District:—Melbourne, 5; St. Kilda, 2; Collingwood, 2; South Melbourne, 1; Richmond, 2; Williamstown, 1; Brighton, 1; Geelong, 4; Portland, 2; Belfast, 1; Warrnambool, 1; Colac, 1; Kilmore, 1; Kyneton Boroughs, 1; Murray Boroughs, 1; Alberton, 1; Castlemaine Boroughs, 2; Sandhurst Boroughs, 1; North Grant, 1; North Grenville, 1; The Ovens, 1; Rodney, 1; The Loddon, 2; Talbot, 2; East Bourke, 2; West Bourke, 2; South Bourke, 2; South Grant, 3; Evelyn and Mornington, 1; Anglesey, 1; Dundas and Follett, 1; Normanby, 1; Villiers and Heytesbury, 2; Polwarth, Ripon, Hampden, and South Grenville, 2; Murray, 2; Gipps Land, 1; Wimmera, 2. Total, 60.

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COMMERCE.

Comparative External Trade of the Ports of Victoria, 1854, 1855.

	1854.		1855.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
Melbourne . .	£ 15,250,563	£ 10,188,527	£ 9,924,838	£ 12,548,548
Geelong . .	2,070,285	1,089,720	1,160,103	458,016
Portland . .	278,159	275,166	202,692	231,379
Port Fairy . .	79,375	152,435	77,285	117,722
Port Albert . .	30,565	79,628	24,517	68,051
Warrnambool . .	34,051	1,751	52.379	36,269
Belvoir . . .			127,090	
Totals . .	17,742,998	11,787,227	11,568,904	13,459,194

The import and export returns for 1856 and the first quarter of 1857, have not, as yet, been officially published, excepting for the port of Melbourne, which appear thus:—

Period.	Imports.	Exports.
Year 1856	£ 13,940,751	£ 14,363,250
First Quarter, 1857 . .	4,391,663	3,979,052
„ „ 1856 . .	3,571,833	4,709,388

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The following is an outline showing the principal sources from which the Public Revenue is derived, and representing the revenue received for the year 1854; viz.:—

From the Gold Fields *, being proceeds of licenses to dig, &c., Storekeepers' licenses, Escort fees, &c.	£458,048
From Customs' Duties, levied on Spirits, Tobacco, Wine, Tea, Beer, Coffee, and Sugar	852,855
From Port and Harbour Dues	47,489
Postage	66,949
Assessment on Live Stock	62,850
Licenses, to Auctioneers, Publicans, Spirit Merchants, &c. .	141,032
Fines and Forfeitures, collected at different courts of justice	62,676
Dues of Public Offices	48,421
Loans	590,500
From Sale of Lands	1,358,078
Licenses, to depasture Stock, &c.	46,532
Miscellaneous.	77,323
Total	£3,812,753
Deduct loans	590,500
Net received	£3.222.253
Balance of Revenue on hand 31st Dec. 1853. .	£765,404
Balance overdrawn on 31st Dec. 1854 . . .	32,098

* The changes in the source of revenue in this important department will be observed in the Revenue Tables of the next page. For the Diggers' Licence there were substituted the Miners' Right Charge and the Export Duty on Gold.

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Comparative Statement of the Consolidated Revenues of Victoria, and Special 31st December 1855, and

Head of Revenue.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1855.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Year ending Dec. 31. 1855.
REVENUES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
CUSTOMS—	174,498 7 1	198,735 12 11	611,470 13 11
Duties on Spirits imported	12,654 4 1	25,8-3 16 10	44,985 2 7
Duties on Wine imported	19,963 15 3	24,160 9 0	57,387 0 6
Duties on Beer imported	33,437 12 6	33,106 7 9	113,279 2 0
Duties on Tobacco, &c., imported	4,989 1 4	6,952 0 11	20,499 13 0
Duties on Cigars imported	27,137 5 8	30,246 10 6	71,047 3 6
Duties on Coffee and Chicory imported	4,902 15 8	5,189 10 8	9,722 13 6
Duties on Sugar imported	19,033 13 10	26,672 8 1	65,858 13 6
Duties on Molasses and Treacle imported	122 17 11	137 3 0	410 0 9
Duties on Gold exported	95,873 15 3	91,106 0 2	231,482 12 11
Total Customs	391,613 8 7	442,178 19 10	1,226,137 16 2
GOLD—			
Gold Licenses	13 0 0	. .	39,821 1 7
Business Licenses	11,074 10 0	5,097 10 0	19,969 10 0
Miners' Rights	11,980 10 0	17,590 0 0	49,507 0 0
Leases of Auriferous Lands and of Quartz Veins	3,354 15 0	912 4 10	3,517 15 0
Escort Fees	615 3 1	147 6 9	20,599 12 2
Treasury and Custody Fees	667 19 2	177 1 7	2,136 6 9
Total Gold	27,705 17 3	23,854 3 2	135,461 5 6
PORT AND HARBOUR DUES	4,573 17 0	5,330 4 1	20,769 2 0
LICENSES—			
Auctioneers'	5,766 13 4	688 11 0	13,464 6 8
Publicans' (including Transfers)	10,417 5 7	8,768 13 4	124,716 14 1
Spirit Merchants'	400 0 0	200 0 0	17,700 0 0
For Registration of Bonded Warehouses	75 0 0	. .	3,525 0 0
All other Licenses	673 5 0	805 12 6	4,569 5 0
Total Licenses	17,332 3 11	10,462 16 10	163,075 5 9
POSTAGE	15,349 15 3	15,904 9 9	80,108 19 9
ASSESSMENT ON STOCK	760 7 11	62 13 10	71,708 15 7
FINES AND FORFEITURES—			
Collected by the Sheriff	997 4 0	775 4 6	2,864 0 6
Collected by the Courts of General Sessions	2 0 0	. .	12 0 0
Collected by the several County Courts	60 0 0	30 0 0	60 0 0
Collected by Courts of Petty Session	1,812 19 8	692 12 8	9,172 14 6
Collected for Breaches of Gold-Field Laws	32 1 0	48 9 6	119 1 0
Crown's share of Seizures and Penalties	49 11 7	55 18 9	709 16 1
Proceeds of the Sale of confiscated and unclaimed Property	296 16 8	199 2 2	3,302 11 0
Miscellaneous Fines	. .	38 16 8	. .
Total Fines and Forfeitures	2,950 12 11	1,830 4 3	16,241 3 1
FEES—			
Of Civil Offices	3,461 8 11	3,779 13 5	9,733 13 6
Of the several Offices of the Supreme Court	6,966 4 11	5,860 13 3	32,173 9 2
Of the Courts of General Sessions	. .	4 8 6	0 14 8

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Funds received into the Treasury, Melbourne, during the Quarters and Years endin 31st December, 1856, respectively.

Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Increase.		Decrease.		Net Decrease.	Net Increase
	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.
£ s. d	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d
764,018 8 2	24,227 5 10	152,547 14 3	. .	. .		
73,801 18 9	13,229 12 9	28,816 16 2	. .	. .		
78,121 19 9	4,196 13 9	20,734 19 3	. .	. .		
123,741 1 11	667 18 3	10,461 19 11	. .	. .		
26,891 4 1	1,962 19 7	6,291 11 1	. .	. .		
106,120 3 9	3,109 4 10	35,073 0 3	. .	. .		
17,830 11 1	296 15 0	8,107 17 7	. .	. .		
90,840 0 0	7,639 14 3	24,986 6 6	. .	. .		
761 17 3	14 5 1	351 16 6	. .	. .		
379,292 14 2	. .	144,810 1 3	4,767 15 1	. .		
1,658,419 18 11	55,333 6 4	432,282 2 9	4,767 15 1	. .		
. .	. .	. .	13 0 0	39,821 1 7		
31,378 4 7	. .	11,408 14 7	6,047 0 0	. .		
84,163 11 0	5,609 10 0	4,656 11 0	. .	. .		
2,220 8 2	. .	. .	2,442 10 2	1,297 6 10		
964 12 6	. .	. .	467 16 4	19,544 19 8		
1,278 1 6	. .	. .	490 16 7	856 5 3		
90,004 17 9	5,609 10 0	16,065 5 7	9,461 4 1	61,521 13 4		
719,945 1 6	756 7 1	. .	. .	824 0 6		
6,479 17 2	. .	. .	5,078 2 4	6,984 9 5		
130,407 0 7	. .	5,690 6 6	1,638 12 3	. .		
17,400 0 0	. .	. .	200 0 0	300 0 0		
4,650 0 0	. .	1,125 0 0	75 0 0	. .		
5,441 3 0	132 7 6	871 18 0	. .	. .		
164,378 0 10	132 7 6	7,687 4 6	6,991 14 7	7,284 9 5		
64,955 3 2	554 14 6	. .	. .	15,153 16 7		
60,108 6 0	. .	. .	697 14 1	11,595 9 7		
2,414 12 8	. .	. .	221 19 6	449 7 10		
48 10 0	. .	36 10 0	2 0 0	. .		
88 0 0	. .	28 0 0	30 0 0	. .		
3,642 10 5	. .	. .	320 7 0	5,531 4 1		
85 14 0	16 8 6	. .	. .	33 7 0		
3,117 18 8	6 7 2	2,408 2 7	. .	. .		
3,106 6 4	. .	. .	97 14 6	196 4 8		
129 15 4	28 16 8	129 15 4	. .	. .		
13,633 7 5	51 12 4	2,602 7 11	1,172 1 0	6,210 3 7		
14,421 16 8	318 4 6	4,688 3 2	. .	. .		
22,753 4 4	. .	. .	1,105 11 8	9,420 4 10		
16 4 0	4 8 6	15 9 4	. .	. .		

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Statement of

Head of Revenue.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1855.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Year ending Dec. 31. 1855.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
FEES—*continued.*			
Of the several County Courts	2,044 3 0	2,103 18 6	9,578 12 0
Of the several Courts of Petty Sessions	1,378 7 7	1,031 14 0	4,067 5 6
Total Fees	13,850 4 5	12,780 7 8	55,553 14 10
LAND—			
Proceeds of the Sale of Land and Town Allotments	197,276 10 9	121,354 2 7	795,362 13 4
Licenses to Depasture Stock	219 13 9	232 10 0	30,066 10 9
Licenses to occupy Public Lands	1,710 8 4	1,857 16 8	8,151 10 0
All other Land Licenses	955 9 2	1,554 12 5	7,220 0 0
Total Land	200,162 2 0	124,999 1 8	840,800 13 6
MISCELLANEOUS—			
Rents (exclusive of Land)	24 11 8	144 1 2	779 13 3
Sale of Government Property	1,760 8 2	1,946 2 4	12,746 18 3
Receipts of the Government Printing Office	1,533 17 5	1,113 10 3	5,653 15 9
Labour of Prisoners	1,387 9 9	3,185 16 2	8,065 19 1
Receipts of the Electric Telegraph Department	1,016 14 1	661 8 1	2,996 15 1
Reimbursements in Aid of Expenses	13,121 0 1	233 19 3	31,614 0 3
Miscellaneous receipts	1,235 10 8		2,790 16 11
Total Miscellaneous	20,079 11 10	6,584 17 3	63,949 16 7
TOTAL REVENUE	694,368 1 1	643,987 18 4	2,674,701 14 9
SPECIAL FUNDS—			
Water Works Loan Debentures	121,874 0 0	. .	560,281 0 0
Amount of Interest on ditto, accruing before date of purchase	2,431 10 5	. .	2,431 10 5
Balance at Credit of Poundage Fund on 31st December, 1855	. .	. .	. .
Poundage Fund	.. ..	7,122 5 1	. .
Police Reward Fund	4,999 0 3	2,079 9 0	18,589 19 5
Fines appropriated to Charitable purposes	914 3 6	1,154 18 0	5,760 9 9
Fines under 3 Wm. 4 (Weights and Measures), cap. 4.	26 16 0	12 0 0	77 6 0
Passengers' Rate	11,488 11 5	2,291 13 11	27,376 4 2
Chinese Passengers' Rate	90 0 0	1,550 0 0	90 0 0
Chinese Annual Rate	11,081 7 3	6,771 0 0	11,081 7 3
Penal Establishment Fund	. .	71 12 0	. .
Toll Fund	. .	72,356 14 4	. .
Unclaimed Poundage	. .	. .	. .
Total Special Funds	152,905 8 10	93,409 9 4	625,787 17 0
SPECIAL ACCOUNTS—			
Finance, 1855	. .	252 16 6	. .
Immigration deposits for remittance	1,325 10 10	10,006 15 9	4,162 19 [illegible]

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Revenues, &c.—continued.

Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Increase. Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Increase. Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Decrease. Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Decrease. Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Net Decrease. Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Net Increase. Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
8,576 11 6	59 15 6	. .	. .	1,002 0 6		
3,767 14 5	. .	. .	346 13 7	299 11 1		
49,535 10 11	382 8 6	4,703 12 6	1,452 5 3	10,721 16 5		
792,135 14 1	. .	. .	75,922 8 2	3,226 19 3		
29,360 19 5	12 16 3	. .	. .	705 10 9		
7,910 9 2	147 8 4	. .	. .	241 0 10		
6,684 14 3	599 3 3	. .	. .	535 5 9		
836,091 16 11	759 7 10	. .	75,922 8 2	4,701 16 7		
2,916 4 10	119 9 6	2,136 11 7	. .	. .		
4,161 3 0	. .	. .	514 5 10	7,885 15 3		
4,790 16 7	. .	. .	430 7 2	862 19 2		
15,778 18 11	1,796 6 5	7,712 19 10	. .	. .		
2,992 8 9	. .	. .	355 6 0	6 6 4		
. .	. .	. .	13,121 0 1	31,614 0 3		
5,437 18 4	. .	2,647 1 5	1,031 11 5	. .		
36,077 10 5	1,917 15 11	12,496 12 10	15,412 10 6	40,369 1 0		
2,992,149 13 10	65,497 10 0	475,837 6 1	115,877 12 9	158,389 7 0		
					Net Decrease.	
. .	. .	. .	121,874 0 0	560,381 0 0		
. .	. .	. .	2,431 10 5	2,431 10 5		
105,861 2 6	. .	105,861 2 6	. .	. .		
32,336 5 4	7,122 5 1	32,336 5 4	. .	. .		
12,278 4 1	. .	. .	2,919 11 3	6,311 15 4		
4,298 10 10	240 11 0	. .	. .	1,461 18 11		
63 14 0	. .	. .	14 16 0	13 12 0		
11,215 8 4	. .	. .	9,196 17 6	16,160 15 10		
9,620 0 0	1,460 0 0	9,530 0 0	. .	. .		
11,670 6 0	. .	588 19 9	4,310 7 3	. .		
1,193 2 1	71 12 0	1,153 2 1	. .	. .		
72,356 14 4	72,356 14 4	72,356 14 4	. .	. .		
27,532 8 7	. .	27,532 8 7	. .	. .		
288,425 16 1	81,251 2 11	249,398 11 7	140,747 2 5	586,760 12 6	59,495 19 6	337,362 0 11
					Net Increase.	
31,097 14 10	252 16 6	31,097 14 10	. .	. .		
22,047 17 6	8,681 4 11	17,884 17 10	. .	. .		

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Statement of

Head of Revenue.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1855.	Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Year ending Dec. 31. 1855.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
SPECIAL ACCOUNTS—*continued.*			
Value of improvements on land sold, deposited	868 10 0	5,482 0 0	874 10 0
Receipts to credit of account of "Other Governments"	. .	43 14 6	. .
Officers' overtime (Customs)	425 8 0	. .	1,981 3 0
Police clothing (repayments in 1856)	. .	1,330 5 7	. .
Total Special Accounts	2,344 8 10	17,115 12 4	6,968 12 8
Suspense (Balance of Account)	. .	. .	. .
Repayments	. .	3,878 6 0	
Advances (Balance of Account)	. .	11,648 3 4	
TOTAL CREDITS for the Quarter ending 31st December, 1856	. .	770,039 9 4	

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Revenues, &c.—continued.

Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Increase.		Decrease.		Net Increase.	
	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Quarter ending Dec. 31. 1856.	Upon the Year ending Dec. 31. 1856.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
6,618 19 2	4,866 10 0	5,744 9 2	. .	. .		
53 19 6	43 14 6	53 19 6	. .	. .		
225 8 0	. .	. .	425 8 0	1,705 15 0		
6,000 0 0	1,330 5 7	6,000 0 0	. .	. .		
66,043 19 0	15,196 11 6	60,781 1 4	425 8 0	1,705 15 0	14,771 3 6	59,075 6 4
534 9 10						

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Statement of the Expenditure of the Government of Victoria for the Quarter ending December 31st, 1856.

Head of Expenditure.	Salaries.	Contingencies.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
I. Houses of Legislature.			
Council	200 0 0	. .	200 0 0
Assembly	1,463 14 0	55 13 8	1,519 7 8
Library	68 18 7	. .	68 18 7
	1,732 12 7	55 13 8	1,788 6 3
II. Executive Departments.			
Chief Secretary's Office	2,690 0 0	355 4 4	3,045 4 4
Treasurer's Department	6,330 17 4	572 17 9	6,903 15 1
Auditor-General	2,708 6 8	119 17 1	2,828 3 9
Registrar-General	1,416 13 4	1,473 0 9	2,889 14 1
	13,145 17 4	2,520 19 11	15,666 17 3
III. Administration of Justice.			
Their Honours the Judges	600 0 0	189 11 1	789 11 1
Law Officers of the Crown	516 13 4	235 15 3	752 8 7
Master in Equity	791 13 4	23 4 8	814 18 0
Insolvent Court, Geelong	240 0 0	3 2 8	243 2 8
Crown Solicitor	830 0 0	58 13 6	888 13 6
Registrar	963 6 6	42 17 6	1,006 4 2
Prothonotary	1,250 0 0	1,585 4 5	2,835 4 5
Sheriff, Melbourne	2,222 11 7	781 18 11	3,004 10 6
Deputy Sheriff, Geelong	350 0 0	53 9 7	403 9 7
Deputy Sheriff, Castlemaine	262 10 0	78 1 4	340 11 4
Deputy Sheriff, Ballaarat	200 0 0	82 1 10	282 17 10
Deputy Sheriffs, various places	354 3 4	128 8 9	482 12 1
General Sessions & County Courts :—			
Melbourne	1,450 0 0	220 14 3	1,670 14 3
Western District	1,122 6 8	700 19 9	1,824 6 5
Eastern District	1,166 13 4	751 4 4	1,917 17 8
Stipendiary Magistrates and Clerks of Petty Sessions	7,592 11 1	821 8 3	8,413 19 4
Coroners	91 13 4	1,486 10 4	1,578 3 8
	20,005 2 8	7,214 2 5	27,219 5 1
IV. Trade and Customs.			
Commissioner's Office	1,866 13 4	4 2 6	1,870 15 10
Port of Melbourne	9,120 16 9	228 11 2	9,349 7 11
Port of Geelong	2,602 19 0	39 1 10	2,642 0 10
Port of Portland	570 5 4	11 16 0	582 1 4
Port of Port Fairy	536 12 0	8 5 0	534 17 0
Port of Warrnambool	518 8 0	5 10 0	523 18 0
Port of Port Albert	504 2 0	. .	504 2 0
Various Stations	133 6 8	. .	133 6 8
	15,853 3 1	297 6 6	16,150 9 7
V. Public Lands.			
Surveyor-General's Office	5,900 0 0	565 2 10	6,465 2 10
Field Branch	19,831 19 9	4,928 13 4	24,650 13 1
Commissioners	1,700 8 6	653 10 11	2,353 19 5
Geological Survey	807 3 4	122 0 6	930 3 10
Marine Survey	208 6 8	45 0 0	253 6 8
Sappers and Miners	125 9 8	305 11 6	431 1 2
Lalla, Surveying Vessel	492 8 0	15 15 0	508 3 0
	29,055 15 11	6,536 14 1	35,592 10 0

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Statement of Expenditure—continued.

Head of Expenditure.	Salaries.	Contingencies.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
VI. Gold Fields.			
Ballaarat District	2,070 16 1	45 10 0	2,116 6 1
Castlemaine	1,887 10 0	59 16 8	1,917 6 8
Sandhurst	1,067 10 1	38 19 9	1,106 9 10
Avoca	2,440 16 8	76 12 1	2,617 8 9
Beechworth	2,179 14 1	81 8 3	2,261 2 4
New Gold Fields	. .	337 5 6	337 5 6
	9,616 6 11	639 12 3	10,255 19 2
VII. Post Office			
Melbourne	7,390 6 0	283 2 8	7,673 8 8
Williamstown	100 0 0	3 3 0	101 3 0
Geelong	810 10 0	6 4 3	816 14 3
Portland	75 0 0	3 3 0	78 3 0
Belfast	75 0 0	3 12 0	78 12 0
Warrnambool	75 0 0	13 0 6	88 0 6
Ballaarat	362 10 0	4 16 0	370 6 0
Castlemaine	275 0 0	3 15 0	278 15 0
Sandhurst	275 0 0	16 18 0	291 18 0
Beechworth	191 5 0	9 11 0	200 16 0
Creswick's Creek	100 0 0	1 8 9	101 8 9
Country Post Offices	28 3 2	143 13 10	171 17 0
Conveyance of Mails	. .	14,192 7 3	14,192 7 3
	9,757 14 2	14,685 15 3	24,443 9 5
VIII. Ports and Harbours.			
Harbour Master, Williamstown	1,632 12 0	434 7 8	2,066 19 8
,, Melbourne	456 2 8	1 9 6	457 12 2
,, Geelong	479 16 0	16 5 5	496 1 6
,, Portland	291 2 0	. .	291 2 0
,, Belfast	291 2 0	11 9 8	302 11 8
,, Port Albert	363 18 0	4 19 7	368 17 7
Lighthouses and Vessels	1,111 16 0	430 6 0	1,542 2 0
Victoria Screw Steamer	3,796 18 11	916 18 2	4,713 17 1
Empire Buoy Boat	336 12 0	. .	336 12 0
Signal Stations	180 14 0	30 11 1	211 5 1
	8,940 13 7	1,846 7 1	10,787 0 8
IX. Police.			
Chief Commissioner's Office	1,650 0 0	. .	1,650 0 0
Detective Police	2,320 5 0	417 4 4	2,737 9 4
General Police Force	58,202 12 3	16,292 11 10	74,495 4 1
	62,172 17 3	16,709 16 2	78,882 13 5
X. Gaols and Penal Establishments.			
Gaol, Melbourne	1,991 17 4	1,667 0 7	3,658 17 11
,, Geelong	700 11 0	471 18 3	1,172 9 3
,, Portland	225 3 0	165 14 2	390 17 2
,, Castlemaine	274 5 0	532 1 10	806 6 10
,, Sandhurst	265 3 0	505 15 7	770 18 7
,, Beechworth	270 13 0	438 0 3	708 13 3
,, Ballaarat	232 3 2	155 12 11	387 16 1

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Statement of Expenditure—continued.

Head of Expenditure.	Salaries.			Contingencies.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Penal Establishments—									
Inspector-General	961	0	0	158	9	3	1,119	9	3
Stockades and Hulks	11,297	0	1	8,172	76	0	19,469	16	1
	16,217	15	7	12,267	8	10	28,485	4	5
XI. Military and Naval.									
Victoria Volunteer Artillery Corps	229	0	0	1,226	12	1	1,455	12	1
Geelong Rifle Corps	200	4	0	418	1	6	618	5	6
Victoria Yeomanry Corps	77	7	0	25	0	0	102	7	0
Inspecting Field-Officer	15	5	0	.	.		15	5	0
	521	16	0	1,669	13	7	2,191	9	7
XII. Public Works and Buildings.									
Commissioner of Public Works	2,455	0	0	208	14	11	2,663	14	11
Works and Buildings, Melbourne District	.	.		48,389	5	10	48,389	5	10
,, Geelong	.	.		3,078	13	3	3,078	13	3
,, Portland	.	.		12	10	0	12	10	0
,, Belfast	.	.		40	0	0	40	0	0
,, Warrnambool	.	.		981	10	2	981	10	2
,, Kilmore	.	.		1,000	0	0	1,000	0	0
,, Gold Fields	.	.		5,833	6	0	5,833	6	0
,, Generally	.	.		20,107	18	5	20,107	18	5
Rents	.	.		5,444	6	4	5,444	6	4
Furniture	.	.		3,154	3	6	3,154	3	6
Central Road Board	2,294	3	4	374	12	2	2,668	15	6
Roads, Bridges, &c.	.	.		137,666	13	4	137,666	13	4
	4,749	3	4	226,261	13	11	231,010	17	3
XIII. Stores and Transport.									
Colonial Storekeeper	1,750	0	0	129	18	10	1,879	18	10
Geelong and elsewhere	175	0	0	.	.		175	0	0
Transport	420	18	0	3,935	15	2	4,356	13	2
	2,345	18	0	4,065	14	0	6,411	12	0
XIV. Education.									
Denominational School Board	2,269	0	7	902	8	9	3,271	9	4
,, Schools	12,848	0	10	5,136	3	11	17,984	4	9
Grammar Schools	.	.		1,384	14	6	1,384	14	6
National Schools	.	.		1,086	0	5	1,086	0	5
	15,217	1	5	8,479	7	7	23,696	9	0
XV. Medical.									
Chief Medical Officer, Melbourne	903	6	8	321	10	10	1,224	17	6
,, Out Stations	735	16	8	.	.		735	16	8
Lunatic Asylum	810	17	9	2,653	7	5	3,464	5	2
	2,450	1	1	2,974	18	3	5,424	19	4

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Statement of Expenditure—continued.

Head of Expenditure.	Salaries.	Contingencies.	Total.
XVI. Immigration.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Melbourne	1,103 6 7	318 14 6	1,422 1 1
Williamstown	390 0 0	1 2 1	391 2 1
Geelong	248 17 10	94 17 8	343 15 6
Portland	125 0 0	245 7 1	370 7 1
Belfast	112 10 0	10 11 4	123 1 4
Gratuities	. .	2,304 12 0	2,304 12 0
Remittances	. .	60,207 16 3	60,207 16 3
	1,979 14 5	63,183 0 11	65,162 15 4
XVII. Miscellaneous Departments.			
Public Library	206 17 4	. .	206 17 4
Government Printer	6,159 19 10	1,381 12 9	7,541 12 7
Electric Telegraph	1,445 3 6	156 1 8	1,601 5 2
Botanic Gardens	610 11 0	44 6 6	654 17 6
Shorthand Writer	213 6 8	49 2 3	262 8 11
Powder Magazine, Melbourne	100 0 0	12 9 0	112 9 0
,, Geelong	39 10 3	0 7 6	39 17 9
Aborigines	150 0 0	66 17 11	216 17 11
Museum of Natural History and Geology	204 8 4	150 5 9	354 14 1
	9,129 16 11	1,861 3 4	10,991 0 3
XVIII. Grants in Aid.			
Charitable and Useful Institutions	. .	1,000 0 0	1,000 0 0
Municipalities	. .	17,989 10 0	17,989 10 0
	. .	18,989 10 0	18,989 10 0
XIX. Miscellaneous Services.			
1. Preparing the Electoral Rolls	. .	10,607 19 0	
2. Formation of Cemeteries	. .	498 0 0	
3. Advertising in the Public Journals	. .	1,092 10 2	
4. Newspapers for Records, &c.	. .	6 14 0	
7. Expenses of Pounds	. .	2,624 8 4	
8. Cost of collecting Census	. .	349 8 8	
15. Grant to children of S. Barrow, Esq.	. .	2,000 0 0	22,388 0 6
17. Prosecutions for breaches of Revenue laws	. .	90 5 8	
22. For destroying Thistles	. .	425 0 0	
23. Commission on Sales of Land	. .	169 7 6	
26. Maintenance of deserted children	. .	132 11 3	
27. Expenses—Hepburn and Parker	. .	17 10 0	
29. Construction Patent Slip	. .	4,374 5 11	
	. .	22,388 0 6	22,388 0 6
Special Appropriations.			
Under the Schedule to the *Constitution Act*—Part 1	3,750 0 0	. .	3,750 0 0
,, Part 2	4,000 0 0	. .	4,000 0 0
,, Part 3	4,500 0 0	. .	4,500 0 0
,, Part 4	1,461 5 8	8 19 1	1,470 4 9
,, Part 6	750 0 0	. .	750 0 0
,, Part 8	6,443 19 7	800 0 0	7,243 19 7
16 Vic., No. 34, University of Melbourne	. .	2,250 0 0	2,250 0 0
18 Vic., No. 40, Interest on Water and Sewerage Debentures	. .	153 0 0	153 0 0

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Statement of Expenditure—continued.

Head of Expenditure.	Salaries.	Contingencies.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Pension to R. Hoddle, Esq.	250 0 0	. .	250 0 0
Interest on Loan for Railway purposes — Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway	. .	1,572 10 0	1,572 10 0
Guaranteed ditto on Railway Shares	. .	7,592 16 4	7,592 16 4
	21,155 5 3	12,377 5 5	33,532 10 8
TOTAL ORDINARY EXPENDITURE out of the Consolidated Revenue, appropriated by the Legislature	244,046 15 6	425,024 3 8	669,070 19 2
SPECIAL FUNDS.			
Poundage Fund	. .	3,064 18 3	3,064 18 3
Police Reward Fund	. .	3,590 18 0	3,590 18 0
Immigrants' Rate Fund	305 7 6	802 19 10	1,108 7 4
Chinese Immigrants' Rate	. .	1,040 2 0	1,040 2 0
Chinese Annual Rate Fund	2,092 16 0	168 12 6	2,261 8 6
Toll Fund	. .	72,356 14 4	72,356 14 4
Fines applicable to Charitable Purposes	. .	1,380 8 9	1,380 8 9
Commissioners of Sewers and Water Supply	. .	30,000 0 0	30,000 0 0
Unclaimed Poundage Fund	. .	16,050 0 0	16,050 0 0
Melbourne, Mount Alexander, and Murray River Company	. .	30,237 11 0	30,237 11 0
Total Special Funds	2,398 3 6	158,692 4 8	161,090 8 2
SPECIAL ACCOUNTS.			
Finance Account, 1855	. .	21,151 11 11	21,151 11 11
Purchases for General Issue (Balance of Account)	. .	3,067 3 6	3,067 3 6
Immigration Deposits	. .	7,023 10 9	7,023 10 9
Improvements on land	. .	587 12 6	587 12 6
Railway Surveys	7,589 19 10	874 1 7	8,464 1 5
Supplementary Estimates, 1856	. .	4,035 16 3	4,035 16 3
Payments on account of 1857	. .	1,588 11 10	1,588 11 10
Refunds from Revenue—			
From Customs' Duties	. .	881 11 11	
,, Port and Harbour Dues	. .	30 2 0	
,, Fines and Forfeitures	. .	351 5 0	1,435 8 0
,, Fees of Office	. .	18 15 9	
,, Land	. .	152 10 4	
,, Miscellaneous	. .	1 3 0	
Refunds from Special Funds—			
From Immigrants' Rate Fund	. .	2 0 0	2 0 0
Total Special Accounts	7,589 19 10	39,765 16 4	47,355 16 2
Total Special Funds, brought forward			161,090 8 2
Total Ordinary Expenditure, brought forward			669,070 19 2
Suspense (Balance of Account)			85 11 5
Total Debits for the Quarter ending 31st December 1856			877,602 14 11

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July, 1857.

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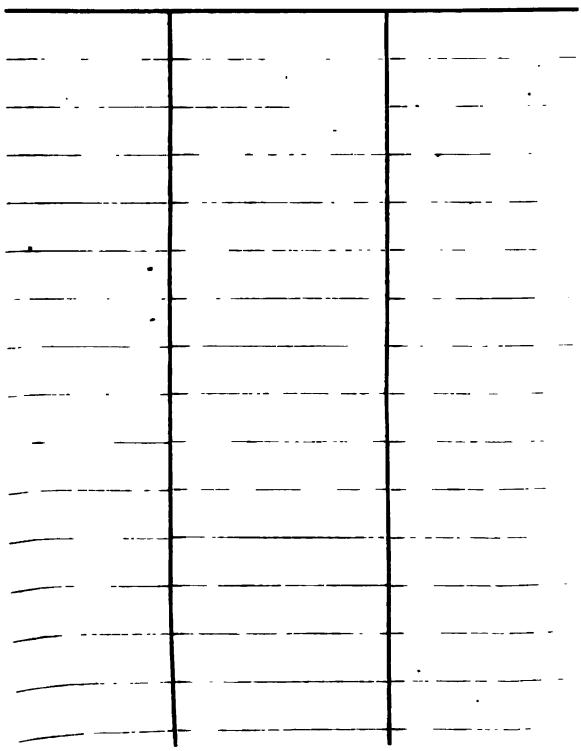

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